GODS SVVEETNESSE MADE OUT IN CHRIST; OR DIVINE RELISHES OF MATCHLESSE GOODNESSE.

BY ROBERT DINGLEY, Minister of the Gospel.

As new borne babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby, if so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, 1 Pet. 2. 2, 3.

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sonnes, I sate under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. Cant. 2. 3.

Beatitudo hominis est gustus bonitatis Dei. Pitiſci & Sculteti. *Id. Typ. Psal.* 34. *Pag.* 272.

Quamdiu blanditur sibi & dulcis est iniquitas, amara est veritas. *Aug. de verb. Dom.* 4.

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Mary Rock

Vera Effigies Roberti Dinglei
in Artib: Magistri.

TO THE RIGHT Honorable HENRY Earle of *Kent*, Lord *Haſtings*, *Weiſford*, and Lord *Grey* of *Ruthin*, and to his truly Noble and Religious Lady.

My much honored Lord and Lady,

GOD hath ſaid, *He will honour thoſe that honour him*[a]. This is made good concerning you: The Lord hath ſhed much honour upon you, that you may the more honour him[b]. It is matter of equity you ſhould honour God more then others, ſeeing[c] above others he hath honoured you; and this is true and laſting policie: For the Lord can make great, [d] and unmake at pleaſure; it is in Him to ſet up, or

[a] 1 Sam. 2, 30.

[b] *Th. Gataker* his parley with Princes, p. 76.

[c] *Quid æquius, quid juſtius quam ut vos honorantem honoretis ipſi.*

[d] *Quod illo dante ſit noſtrum nobis ſuperbientibus ſit alienum.* Aug. Hom. 14.

pull downe. True [e] Nobility hath Vertue and Grace for its chiefe ingredients. [f] Twas this made the *Bereans* noble. [g] *Since thou waſt pretious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable, and I have loved thee* (ſaith the Lord to his poore Church.) But as the Lapwing hath a crown upon his head, and yet feeds on dung: ſo many who are inveſted with the Robe of Honour, live unworthily: faults are not onely ſooner eſpied, but are [h] more odious in great ones then in others. Again, [i] how beautifull is Grace hanging in the boſome of Honour? What opportunities have ſuch for well-doing? How wil their example win others? How glorious is it to be honourable in the eyes of God and good men? [k] *Not many Noble are called*, and therefore how doe the graces of the Spirit ſhine out in ſuch? Be perſwaded to count this your greateſt honour to ſtudy the things of eternity, to countenance Religion more and more, and to lay

[e] *Nobilitas ſumma eſt atq; unica virtus.* Juven. Sat. 8.
[f] Acts 17. 11.
[g] Iſai. 43. 4.
[h] *Monſtroſa res eſt ſedes prima vitiorum.* Bern.
[i] *Nobilis genere, nobilior ſanctitate.* Aug. Epiſt. 179.
[k] 1 Cor. 1. 26.
[l] *Minime Deus eſt acceptor perſonarum, neſcio tamen quo pacto virtus in nobili plus placet, an forte quia plus claret? &c.* Bern. ad Sophiam. virg.

lay forth your ſelves for the kingdome of Chriſt, that ſo you may move in the higheſt Spheare of your power for GOD and his people, and then your Name ſhall be ſweet to poſterity, and the foundation of your Houſe ſhall be laid ſure.

But pardon me (Right Honourable) why doe I perſwade you to that which I know is the great deſigne of your hearts, and the buſineſſe of your lives? You are pretious in Gods eyes, you are zealous for his glory; and I wiſh that all our Nobility and Gentry were ſuch as you are. You have appeared for God in the worſt of times[m], you have been for God in tempeſts as well as calmes, in foule weather as well as faire: you have ſtood up for the truth when others have ſtood up againſt it[n], and you ſee it is not in vain to ſide with God. What wonders, what miracles hath God wrought in our dayes? Your comfort lies here, that you have

[m] The true Diamond ſhines beſt in the dark.

[n] *Non tam vos quam Chriſtum in vobis perſequuntur.* Salvian de Prov. lib. 8.

have acted cordially and unweariedly in the work: you have ſtood for the truth, and the truth hath ſtood for you. Now the Lord root you in the truth, and in the love of it, that you [o] may be bottom'd on the Rock *Jeſus Chriſt*, and ſo [p] *be ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord. O taſte and ſee how good the Lord is* to you, and his people that truſt in him. Endeavour [q] *to taſte God* in your mercies, and to get a ſpirituall Reliſh of that Divine ſweetneſſe that is in Chriſt: It is my humble deſire to aſſiſt your honours in this great work, by theſe rude Notes which I here preſent unto you, wherein the Spirituall taſte is opened and applied, beſeeching your Honours to vouchſafe the peruſall, acceptation and protection of this book. Three things command and encourage me to lay theſe Notes at your feet. 1. That experience which you have in Spirituall things, whereby you can judge

[o] Matth. 7. 25.

[p] 1 Cor. 15. 50

[q] *Origo fontium omnium mare, bonorum omnium Deus.* Bern. in Cant

judge of Divine truths, and delight in them. 2. That earnest desire which I have of making some publick acknowledgements of your great & undeserved favours to me, seeing it is not in my power to retaliate. 3. That confidence I have of your pardon for this my boldnesse, and acceptance of these poor endeavours; becausse Goodnesse and Greatnesse, Clemency and Eminency doe meet in your bosoms and kisse each other. And thus *commending you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified, I rest,* Acts 20. 38.

Novemb. 14.
1648.

Your Honours to be commanded by you in the Lord,

ROBERT DINGLEY.

To the ſpirituall Reader of this BOOKE.

HAving had acquaintance with the worthy Author, I was deſired by him to peruſe this enſuing Worke, which I have done with much quickning to my own heart; Rejoycing to finde in theſe times, (when the ſtreames of mens thoughts both Miniſters and others are too much diverted to other Channells) a pious ſoule taken up with, and purſuing after the ſweet and gracious Goodneſſe *that is in* God, *and the incomparable* Beauty *in Jeſus Chriſt, and that of a free ſight and taſte of either, ſetting out the ſame to others; Unto which he was incited by the very Scripture he had choſen, as a foundation to his more private Meditations about this* Goodneſſe: *He could not look upon the firſt words,* Taſte and ſee, *but he found himſelfe called upon thereby to invite others to the Participation*

Participation of it, and to that end to make it publique; being led on herein to follow him, whose speech this was, David; (*who is set before us as the Patterne of* Affectionate Piety *in the Old Testament, as* Paul *is in the new*); *Thus by his practice making good his own Comment on the Text, and without which it had been defective; And with* Philip, (*the same that having been taken with the* beauty *of the Sunne, cryed out with vehement and unsatisfied longings,* Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth), *He inviteth all true* Nathanaells *to* come and see *the glory of that* Messiah *hath shined into his own soule; And what in the one Treatise, and then in the other, he hath held forth both this* Goodnesse (*so desired*) *of the* Father; *and this* Glory (*so desireable*) *of the* Sonne. That God who hath commanded Light to shine out of darknesse, shine (*graciously*) into our hearts, to give (*us*) the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ; *And to this end Blesse* This, *and all other Glimpses and Discoveries of himselfe in the mouths and writings of all his servants, enamoured with him.* Amen.

Tho: Goodwin.

CHRISTIAN READR,

HEre is presented to thy view a Treatise, which will lead thee to the power of Godlinesse; and the holinesse of the inward man; which in this age I feare few study and set their hearts upon, men generally being taken up either with *notions* or *novelties*, in nothing more placing their *Religion* then in a *taste* of every new *opinion*; a confluence of which water (an *unclean spirit* in judgement being sent forth) hath made up that *floud* with which so many in our time have been swept away.

Cum de Trinitate loquitur sapit Arrium, cum de gratia, sapit Pelagium; cum de persona Christi, sapit Nestorium. Bern. de quodam Petro Magistro Epist. Guidoni. 192.

It hath been a *comfort* to mee in many endless and inextricable questions, that *the Kingdome of God consists not in meat and drinke, but in righteousnesse, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; not in doubtfull disputations, and unpracticall curiosity, but

Zach. 13. 2.

Rom. 12. 15.

In absoluto ac facili est æternitas. Hilar. de Trin. l. 10.

Rom. 14. 17. but the Doctrine of the *free grace of God*, and the *fulnesse of the righteousnesse of Christ*, are plaine to him that *will understand*, and that in the true

John 17. 3. and saving knowledge of these, *is eternall* life to be had.

And it hath been *a Rule* to mee, that the more holy and spirituall any man is, the more fully his heart is in these things. For the Word being *a mould*, and these being the great things thereof, they must needs make the deepest impression upon the heart that is rightly cast into it. And it is observed of the

τύπος διδαχῆς εἰς ὃν παρεδόθη. Rom. 6. 17.

Vincent. Lirinens. adverst. hæres. cap. 9. Saints of old; *Mos iste semper in Ecclesiâ viguit, ut quo quisq; foret religiosior, eò promptius novellis adinventionibus contrairet.*

Scientia visus & gustus. Of spirituall Truths there is a twofold knowledge held forth in Scripture, a *seeing and tasting knowledge* (for the new man hath *his senses* as well as the old) and both are conjoyned in this Text and Tract.

Heb. 5. 14. 1. *Seeing knowledge*, Joh. 6. 40. which

which proceeds from a ſpirit of *renovation*, ſpiritualizing the faculty, giving an *underſtanding to know him that is true*, 1 Joh. 5. 20. and from a ſpirit of *Revelation* diſcovering by a divine light ſpirituall objects; not only to the *ſpeculative*, but alſo to the *practicall* judgement; and in theſe the *teaching of God*, and the *demonſtration of the Spirit*, doe conſiſt.

2. *Taſting knowledge*, 1 Pet. 2. 3. when a reliſh of the *goodneſſe* is brought with the *Truth* into the whole heart, that it becomes to a man *ſweeter then honey and the honey-combe*; which ſweetneſſe doth effectually draw and inflame the ſoule after the things thus taſted, to obtaine a further and full enjoyment; *the earneſt of the Spirit, and the grapes of Eſhcol*, which leaves in the ſoule ſuch *a taſte*, that it *can never be ſatisfied*, till he drink out of the *rivers of his pleaſure*.

There is indeed *a ſight* that unregenerate men may have of things

Exportatio vini, olei, lignaminis, lege Imperiali interdicta fuit, ne Barbari gustu illecti promptius invaderent fines Romanorū. Leg. 1. Cod: quæ res exportari non debeant.

Accipe ſpeculum concavum, quod vocatur incendens, & illud pone ex oppoſito ſolis, & accenditur quod opponitur in puncto reflexionis. Sic etiam contingit ſpiritualiter, cum ſpiritus illumina-

tur simplici claraque notitia, accenditur & in æternum amorem collabitur dimersus sibi moriens & in Deo vivens. Hen. Harphius. theolog. Mystic. l. 2. c. 63.

Sol non omnes quibus lucet calefacit. Sic sapientia multos quos docet, non continuò etiam accendit. Bern. in Cant. ser. 23

Odi libros meos & sæpè opto eos interire, quod metuo ne morentur lectores & abducant à lectione ipsius scripturæ quæ sola sapientiæ fons est, ac terreor exemplo superioris ætatis, &c. Luth. in Gen. 19.

spirituall, and a *taste* answerable to this sight, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. (which are the highest works of the Spirit in a *temporary beleever*, not evill in themselves, nor to be lightly esteemed; so men neither rest in them, nor fall from them) as the one is but *a form*, so is the other also, as being onely from a supposed *sweetnesse*, and doth produce onely *a false joy*, proceeding onely from the Spirit *elevating* nature, and not *renewing* it; the Spirit *working* upon a man, and not *dwelling* in him: And enabling a man to taste the goodnesse that *comes* by spirituall things, and not the *good that is in them.*

The Author of this Treatise hath taken very good and profitable paines in opening these mysteries and secrets of God, which I doe commend unto thee; with this Caution, which I desire may be taken in the Reading of all the writings of men, that they doe not take thee off from the holy Scriptures of God. And that the Lord may

may have glory, and the Church edification by all the Labours of his servants, is the hearty prayer of him who subscribes himselfe,

Thy servant in the Gospel,

WILL: STRONG.

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Courteous

Courteous Reader,

The Author earneſtly deſires one favour at thy hands (before thou readeſt this Book) which is *to correct with thy Pen the Printers miſtakes following.*

PAge 31. in the Margent for *διδιακτικοὶ* read *διδακτικοὶ*. pag. 42. in Marg. for *Schueptius*, r. *Schnepfius*. p. 51. in Marg. for *Manzius*, r. *Manzius*. p. 58. in Marg. for *Aug. de Tem. p.* 18. r. *Aug. de Temp.* 18. p. 60. in Marg. after *Buſineſs*, onely a comma; but after *Pythagoras*, a full ſtop. p. 69. line 29. for *thing*, r. *things*. p. 70. l. 13. the directive *w*, which ſtands before bitterneſs, place l. 15. before earthly. p. 73. l. 7. after to *damne*, add *me*. p. 73. l. 11. for *prooping*, r. *drooping*. p. 78. in Marg. after life, onely a comma. p. 91. l. 9. blot out the comma. p. 117. in Marg. for *Elu-Par*, r. *Eln Par*. p. 127. in Marg. for, *idem in Mat.* 19. 17. r. *P. Martyr in Mat.* 19. 17. p. 128. l. 12. for *there*, r. *thence*: and l. 22. for *God*, r. *Gods*. p. 140. in Marg. for 8to, r. 8^uo^. p. 146. in Marg. (in moſt copies) for *quevere*, r. *quærere*. p. 147. in Marg. (in moſt copies) for *gratiarum*, r. *gratiarum*: and for, *religiovis*, r. *religionis*. p. 179. place the directive *x*, before Propheſies. p. 189. in Marg. for *Hexamen*, r. *Hexemer*. p. 191. in Marg. for *vegetabit æternum*, r. *vegetabit in æternum*; and for *lues*, r. *luce*. p. 198. for *Jerſome*, r. *Jerome*. p. 208. l. 24.

ERRATA.

l. 24. for *heart-ſiftings*, r. *heart-liftings*. p. 211. in Marg. (in moſt copies) for 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. r. 2 *Cor.* 1. 30 p. 212. in Marg. for *Dædati*, r. *Diodate*. p. 213. l. 17. for *often*, r. *of them*. p. 214. in Marg. for *Sugenium*, r. *Eugenium*. p. 220. l. 25. for 2 *Cor.* 4. 21. r. 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. p. 229. in Marg. for 777. to 779, r. 777. to 791. p. 248. l. 23. for *Job.* 12. 13. r. *Joh.* 12. 32. p. 252. in Marg. for *expectant*, r. *ſpectant*. p. 259. in Marg. (in many copies) for *reſigere*, r. *reſiſtere*. p. 262. l. 21. over againſt the directive *, write in the Margent, 1648. *July*. p. 277. in Marg. for *Julii*, r. *Jul.*

DIVINE

DIVINE RELISHES OF Matchleſſe Goodneſſe.

PSAL. 34. 8. the former part.

O taſte and ſee that the Lord is good: Bleſſed is the man that truſts in Him.

THIS Book of Pſalmes, which for the moſt part was penned by *Dauid*, is called by ſome, *The Anatomy of the Soule:* For herein we ſee all the poſtures and conditions of Gods ſervants lively expreſſed in very excellent patterns. We find them ſometimes mourning for ſin, and ſin ſtraights; otherwhiles rejoycing in deliverances, & boaſting in the ſmiles of Chriſt; now putting forth their longings after God, and dependance on him: anon their joy in God, and care to pleaſe him: ſometimes earneſt for them-

1. Of the book of Pſalmes.

themſelves, by and by for the Church. This variety of Hymnes ſtands upon record, that in publick and privat Services, we might uſe them according to ſeverall occaſions, not onely by reading and meditating on them, but alſo by ſinging[a] of them.

[a] See Mr. *Cotton* on this ſubject. See 2 Chron. 29.30. Matth. 26 30. Jam 5. 13. Col. 3.16.

2. Of this Pſalm the occaſion of it.

The occaſion of this Pſalm you find in the Title prefixt (which is as truly Scripture as the reſt of the Pſalme,) *A Pſalme of David when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, who drove him away and he departed.* *David* being in continuall feare of his life, by reaſon of *Sauls* cruelty, *flies to Gath, a Citie of the Philiſtims:* Doubtleſſe there he hoped to have ſojourned unknown, and although he could not but apprehend much danger in flying thither, by[b] reaſon of the many victories he had obtained over the Philiſtims, and for killing *Goliah* (who was of *Gath*;) why yet ſuch was *Sauls* wrath, and *Davids* feare, that he had more hope of ſafety there, then in the land of *Iſrael.* Well, but *David* is fallen out of the pan into the fire; for no ſooner is he got thither, but the ſervants of King *Abimelech*[c] (whoſe proper name was *Achiſh*) diſcover, apprehend, and carry him before the King. And now *David* was put to his ſhifts, his plot was this, *He changed his behaviour before them*, and feigned him-

1 Sam. 21. 12. 13.

[b] *Arthur Iackſon* on the place.

[c] *Abimelech* a cõmon name to the Philiſtian Kings, as *Pharaoh* to the Ægyptian

himſelfe mad, he ſcrabbles on the doores of the gate, and lets his ſpittle drivell on his beard. See the deſired effect, *Achiſh* frownes upon his ſervants, ſaying, *Lo, you ſee the man is mad, wherefore then have you brought him to me? Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this fellow to play the mad man in my preſence?* So *David* departed thence, and eſcaped to the Cave *Adullam.*

From all which you may note foure things.

1. That Saints going on in Gods wayes, may be brought into wonderfull ſtraights, and be put to very ſtrange ſhifts. — 1. *Note.* See Heb. 11. 36,37.

This God ſuffers to try them, and to ſet Faith, and Patience, and Prayer a-work, to heighten his glory, and their thankfulneſſe in the deliverance, and to make Heavens joyes the ſweeter at laſt. — *Reaſon.*

Judge not ſuch as are brought into ſtraights, *as though they were* [d] *greater ſinners then others:* you ſee it may be the portion of Gods own children, keeping in his own wayes. — 1. *Uſe.* [d] Luke 13.2.4

Gueſſe likewiſe what perplexities are treaſured up for unſanctified wretches, that goe on in ſin, [e] *where ſhall the ungodly and ſinner appeare?* — 2. *Uſe.* [e] 1 Pet.4.13.

2. There is [f] a lawfull kind of policie which holy men may uſe without ſin, for — 2. *Note.* [f] *vid.* Saltmarſh of this ſubject

their owne ſafety and preſervation. The Scripture abounds with examples, 1 *Sam* 26.12.21. *Judg.*3.19. *Joſh.* 8.4. *cum multis aliis.*

Reaſ. They are bid to be *wiſe as Serpents*, and they have need of policie, for they live as *ſheep among wolves.*

1. *Uſe.* 1. To ſilence thoſe that ſay, Religion dulls mens wits, and makes them fools and ſots, voyd of ingenuity; whereas Religion doth not aboliſh, but refine wit and policy, that they be not extravagant.

2. *Uſe.* 2. This pleads not for ſinfull craft, and
[e] 2 Cor.4.2. Machiavilian jugling, which is ſo rife in our dayes, that ſome ſtick not to ſay, The Jeſuits are fooles to us.

3. *Note.* 3. God many times ſo [h] infatuates his
[h] 2 Sam.15.31 Iſai.54.17. enemies, that they let ſlip great advantages for the ruine of his friends.

Reaſon. That ſo (when it is too late) his enemies may ſee their folly, & gnaw their tongues for vexation; and his friends ſo eſcaping as
[i] Pſal. 124. 1, 8. [i] a bird out of the ſnare, may ſee Gods wiſdome, and acknowledge his goodneſſe.

1. *Uſe.* Let enemies be warned no longer to engage againſt the holy Wayes and Ones of
[k] Pſal.2.10. God: for [k] he can blind their eyes, and infatuate their counſels.

2. *Uſe.* Let Beleevers be [l] *carefull in nothing*,
[l] Phil.4.6. GOD can relieve them in the greateſt ſtraights, and commonly a Saints extremity

mity is the Lords opportunity.

4. And laſtly, on all occurrences tending to our deliverance, we muſt not ſacrifice to our own nets, to our policie or wit in contriving things, but lay hold on the opportunity to admire and bleſſe God: So did *David*. From this deliverance aroſe the 34. Pſalm. 4. *Note.*

God deſerves and expects this from us, 'tis all the rent we pay unto him for all our mercies: it tends to his glory and our good, it is the worke of heaven, and ſo ſhould be our delight. And therefore *Reaſon.*

Let us bluſh at our unthankfulneſſe, and ſetting up the Idols of our own wit and induſtry, as though the Creature could act without God; and remember to throw aſide all the praiſe for him, that *will not give his* [m] *glory to another*, *Uſe.*

[m] Iſaiah 2.48.

For the Text that I have culd out of this Pſalm, we ſhall examine the coherence, and then the words themſelves. 3. Of this verſe and the coherence in the firſt place.

1. The coherence, which ſtands thus, *David* bleſſeth God for this deliverance, and perſwadeth others to taſte him and truſt in him.

I [n] *will bleſs the Lord at all times, & his praiſe ſhall continually be in my mouth, &c. O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I ſought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my feares. This* [n] Verſe 1. 3. 4, 6, 7, 1.

poore man cried, and the Lord heard him, and ſaved him out of all his troubles. The Angell of the Lord encampeth round about them that feare him, and delivereth them. O taſte and ſee that the Lord is good: bleſſed are all they that truſt in him.

The notes from the coherence are three.

1. *Note.* 1. The preſence of Angels encamping round about Beleevers, ſhould raiſe up in their ſpirits an holy ſecurity in troubles, and make them *taſte and ſee how good the Lord is.* For,

1 Kings 10.22 & 1 Chron.11. 4. & Pſal. 105 33,40. Heb. 12.22. ° Pſal.68.17, P 2 Reg.19,35

1. 'Tis Angell (in the ſingular number) but he ſpeaks of an Hoſt, elſe how could he encamp, and often in the Hebrew one is put for a multitude. You read of an *innumerable company of Angels.* And when there is mention of particulars of °twenty thouſand, & thouſands of thouſands. This glorious Hoſt encamps round about the people of God. And if P one Angel in a night made ſuch havock among their enemies, as to ſlay *an hundred fourſcore and five thouſand Aſſyrians.* then why ſhould we doubt but huge Hoſts of theſe are able to guard the Church and ſubdue their enemies; eſpecially conſidering that

9 *Angeli in hunc finem creati ſunt ut ſerviant.* Calv.

2. This is their office, as you ſee *Heb.* 1. 14. and *Pſa.*91, 11. The 9 work of Angels is to attend and wait on the heires of glory, and *beare them up in their hands, leſt they daſh their*

their feet against a stone, viz. lest they come to any evill.

3. They can do nothing without power & commission from God: if Christ would not worke without a commission, much lesse dare Angels that are meere Creatures. And therefore in the midst of their encampings we should [r] eye Jesus Christ who is their Generall, the Prince, the Lord of the Angels, and taste his goodnesse in their attendance.

Reason 3.

r Col. 16. 2.10.

1. Then it meets with those heart-dejecting and soule-cumbring [s] feares of Gods Saints, who are ready to be startled, and almost distracted at every rumour, and supposed danger in these distempered times (as *David* Psalm 11. 3.) How often have they given up all for lost, and yet God hath wrought deliverance? Surely such forget this truth. An Host of Angels guards the Church, all our outward strength is nothing to this, and yet how ready are wee to nestle and repose there? And thus our faith ebbs and flowes with our outward accommodations.

1. *Use.*

s *In metu consilia prudentium & vulgi rumores juxta audiuntur.* C. Tacit hist. lib. 3. c. 11. *Res est imperiosa timor.* Martial. lib. 2 Ep: 59

My brethren, a Beleever having this Guard of Angels about him, is more secure then King *Solomon* in that posture, *Cantic.* 3. 7, 8. For a stronger power might come and destroy such a Guard, or they might fall out and destroy one ano-

Cant. 3:7,8.

The vanity of outward ſtrength.

ther: Drouzineſſe might over-take them as an armed man, and then their weapons might be turned againſt them. Or finally, they might conſpire to betray their ſecure Maſter. How ever, were they never ſo ſtrong, unanimous, vigilant, or faithfull, they could not keep off hot thunderbolts from heaven, or the arrowes of peſtilence that flye by night, nay, they could not give a minutes ſleep, nor eaſe an aking tooth, &c.

There is no Beleever but hath a ſtronger and better Guard then that every night, *ſcil.* an invincible Guard of Angels with glittering Speares round about him, ſuch honour, ſuch ſecurity have all the Saints.

2. *Uſe.*

Others run into the contrary extreame, and worſhip Angels, [t] and think of them above that which is written. This is to entertain the man, and ſlight the maſter, admire the Toole, and not the Workman. God doth not love theſe doings, he is very jealous, &c. Nay, the Angels are grieved. See *Judg.* 13. 16. & *Rev.* 22. 8. 9. Col. 2. 18. Yet thus doe poore ſilly Papiſts, and all of that Synagogue of Satan, that pſeudo-Catholicke Church. Whereas we ſhould ſee and taſte divine goodneſſe in all, and admire God ſtill, ſaying, if the ſervants be ſo powerfull and glorious, what then is the

[t] *Caranza* moſt knaviſhly reads it, *De iis qui angulos colunt*, That meet in corners, well knowing how much the place makes againſt their worſhipping of Angels.

the Maſter, [u] he that made them, and keeps them, and ſends them to us? How ſhall we conceive of his greatneſſe and goodneſſe, before whom thoſe creatures skreen their faces from the dazling and ſtunning brightneſſe of his glory, at whoſe beck and command they are continually? we may admire him, and love him in our hearts, but we cannot comprehend him in the Epycicle of our minds. Theſe are but ſpangles, and twinkling ſtarres in the Canopie of heaven, he is that Sun of righteouſneſſe that at once illuminates and drowns them. They have all their beauty and luſtre from him, and are lumps of darkneſſe and deformity compar'd to him.

[u] *Angeli ſunt miniſtri parati ad omnem voluntatem Dei, quemadmodum itaque ſtultè fecerit ſi miniſtros conſulum & ſenatus imploraveris, & non conſules ipſos & ſenatum, cum poteſtas juvandi non ſit in miniſtrorum, ſed in magiſtratus manu; ita & hæc ſumma ſtultitia eſt, in neceſſitatibus invocare Angelos cum invocandus ſit Dominus ipſe, apud quem eſt poteſtas juvandi & ſalvandi quæ non eſt penes Angelos.* Muſculus in Pſal. 34. 7. pag 308. *Angelos non eſſe colendos, demonſtrat Auguſtin. de vera Religione, cap. 55.*

Thirdly, behave your ſelves as a people guarded by Angels ſet upon duty.

3. *Uſe.*

And firſt, be ſure you keep in Gods [w] wayes, and thy wayes (*viz.* in your callings generall and particular) For GOD hath charged his Angels to keep you in your wayes, but not in your wandrings, Pſal. 91. 11.

1.

[w] *ut Angeli noſtri ſint Chriſti membra, nos eſſe oportet.* Calv.

2. Reverence will become you in Divine Services, if for no other reaſon, yet for this,

2.

1 Cor. 11. 10. & 1 Cor. 4. 9. 1 Tim. 5. 21.

this, [x] that Angels are alwayes looking on you. Angels are preſent at Divine exerciſes, and are ey-witneſſes of our carriage there. O grieve not your guard of Angels by irreverence.

3. 3. Imitate the Angels that guard you in praiſing God, in prying into Goſpel-myſteries, in rejoycing over converted ſinners; finally, in performing obedience Angelically, *viz.* ſwiftly, without delay; willingly, without grudging; faithfully, without treachery; humbly, without pride; and conſtantly, without with-drawing: write after ſo faire a Copie, eccho to the muſick that is above, come as neere them as you can, and beg of God to help you, that you may doe his *will upon earth, as it is done in heaven.*

4. Next, thirſt for diſſolution, when you ſhall need guarding no longer, but take up your Harps and ſit down in the Quire, and beare your part in thoſe melodious Diapaſons, then ſhall you be equall with the Angels, [y] *Luke* 20. 38.

[y] *Quiſquis hic premitur, & affligitur ſive pravis animi affectibus, ſive corruptione & moleſtia reſpiciat ad ſtatum Angelicum futuri ſæculi illoque ſe ſoletur.* Muſculus in Matth. 22. 30.

5. 5. See Divine goodneſſe, and taſte that in Angels attendance: [z] This the coherence

[z] *Non dicit guſtate & videte quoniam bonus Angelus, ſed quoniam bonus Dominus.* Muſculus in Pſal. 34. 7. pag. 308.

chiefly

chiefly urgeth, and therefore consider the goodnesse of God in reference to that in these three particulars.

1. God might have left you exposed to dangers, and turn'd you all going to Hell with the fallen Angels. Truly my brethren, you are more ingaged to God then Angels, That God should leave some of them being fallen, and resolve never to pitty them, nor look after them more, and yet send his Son to redeem, his elect Angels to guard you, causing his bowels to sound over you, and charging all his servants to shew love and respect to you, truly this may give you a tast of free grace, and the goodnesse of God to you. Heb. 2. 16.

2. Angels are the most glorious creatures of all, man a little lower then they. They are the glistering Courtiers, and the beautifull companions of Christ. [a] Now that such creatures should be seen to encamp about sinfull wretches, dust & ashes, yea *Wormes and no Men*, this is the goodnesse of God: that any creatures should be serviceable to man that lost his Dominion over them by the fall, that a Raven should minister unto the Prophet, this is more then we could chalenge. Again, that men like our selves shoul be ready to guard us, servants in our families, Civill powers and Martiall in kingdomes; here's the goodnesse

2.

[a] *Ingens bonitas Dei & cura paterna erga Ecclesiam describitur, quod tales nobis præsides adjungit.* Hen. Molleras prælect. in Psal. 34. 5. pa. 275.

neſſe of God; but that all the Hoſt of Heaven ſhould be abaſed to ſo low a work, this eſpecially invites us to taſte and ſee Divine goodneſſe. *Lord what is Man that thou art* thus *mindfull of him?* Tygers and Devils might deſervedly be our companions, and lo Angels are ſent to miniſter unto us: Angels encamp about us who have often encamped againſt thee.

3. A guard of Angels is a [b] ſuitable reliefe to the Saints in tentations and inward aſſaults from Satan and his evill Angels: they are not more ready to tempt and divert, then good Angels to revive and counſell us. Indeed this is properly the worke of the Spirit to come with inward ſtrengthenings; and yet good Angels may be his inſtruments or agents. Oh admire the goodneſſe of God in making ſuch a ſuitable proviſion for our ſecurity. And ſo much for that poynt.

3. [b] *Optimè ergò infirmitati noſtræ conſulit Deus cum tales dat nobis adjutores qui Satanæ nobiſcum reſiſtât, ſuamq; operam modis omnibus impendant ad nos tuendos*, Calv. in Heb. 1.14. Dan. 8.16. & 9.21.23.

Secondly, in that *David* is not contens to taſte Gods goodneſſe himſelfe, unleſſe he call upon others to joyne with him, Obſerve,

2. *Note.* Such as by ſweeteſt experience have once taſted Divine goodneſſe themſelves, cannot but ſtirre up others to be ſharers with them. *O taſte and ſee with me, how good, &c.* As if *David* ſhould have ſaid, I for my part have ſeen and taſted much of God and his

his goodneſſe; & which may ſeem ſtrange, never more then in my greateſt ſtraights: For the golden conduit pipes of ſolemne Ordinances, and creature enjoyments, being cut off, I have been driven to goe to Gods fulneſſe, and drink more immediatly and plentifully at the well head. I am loath to eat theſe heavenly viands, and ſoule-raviſhing morſels of contentment alone, *Come hither all you that feare God,* and love God, *and I will tell you what God hath done for my ſoule.* O come fellow-ſinners, taſte and ſee with me how good the Lord is, how comfortable the embraces of Chriſt are, and how ſweet communion with heaven is, &c.

Pſal. 66. 16.

I ſhall now lay you down the grounds and arguments.

The firſt ſhall be drawn from Scripture-examples of Saints that have been carefull to doe this.

1. *Reaſon.*

1. *Paul* [c] wiſh'd heartily that both *Agrippa*, and all that heard him, were altogether ſuch as he was, excepting his bonds.

1.
[c] Acts 26. 29.

He that had received the five Talents, went and traded with them.

2.
[d] Matth. 25. 16

'Tis ſaid, [e] *They that feared the Lord ſpake often to one another* in *Malachi.*

3.
[e] Malach. 3. 16

So ſoon as [f] *Matthew* was converted, he called together an huge multitude of Publicans and others to meet at his houſe.

4.
[f] Luke 5. 29.

Philip

5. *Philip* had no ſooner taſted communion with Chriſt, but he runs to *Nathanael* to invite him to Chriſt, ſaying, *O come and ſee.* ᵍ Above all,

ᵍ John 1.45.

6. The woman of *Samaria* had no ſooner taſted Chriſts living waters, but in poſt haſte, leaving her water-pot, ſhe runs into the Citie to call out her friends and neighbours to ſee and taſte how good the Meſſiah was.

ʰ John 4.28.

7. And ſo *David* here in this Pſalm, *&c.* and elſewhere, where he vowes, that if God will *reſtore to him the joyes of his ſalvation*, that then *he will teach tranſgreſſors Gods wayes, that ſinners might be converted unto him.*

Pſa. 51.12, 13.

Now all theſe examples are written for our inſtruction, and we muſt imitate Saints in wel-doing.

2 Theſſ. 3. 9. 1 Chron. 11. 1.

2. *Reaſon.* God hath ſtrictly commanded this: If thoſe that have received the wealth of the world, then much more thoſe that have obtained the Heavenly Riches of Gods grace, are warned to doe good therewith to others, and to be ready in poynt of diſtribution and communication.

Luke 22. 13. Ezek. 18. 32. 1 Pet. 4. 10.

3. *Reaſon.* 3. 'Tis Gods end in beſtowing his graces and comforts on us, not that we ſhould keep them to our ſelves, but benefit others by them, and ſo bee ſerviceable to the publiquè, to the Body, and for that is every member

member made and furniſh-d with abilities: [i] *Men doe not light a Candle to thruſt it under a Buſhel, but to ſet it up in a Candleſtick, that it may give light to all*, Matth. 5. 15. *The manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall*, and God comforts us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which be in trouble. Let not God faile of his end. O deceive not his expectation.

[i] *Injuriam facit acceptis Chriſti bonis quâ illa tenaciter ſibi ſoli uſurpat.* Muſculus in Johan: 1. 16 2 Cor: 1. 4.

4. Next, 'tis the nature of true Grace to be diffuſive and communicative: [k] Grace cannot long be conceal'd, they that have taſted divine ſweetneſſe, cannot chuſe but ſpeak of it to others, their hearts would burſt if they ſhould be ſilent. Grace is like fire in the bones, they that have it cannot hide it, 'tis compared to new wine, and it muſt have vent: the blind men that were cured, were charged to be ſilent, but they could not hold their peace, &c.

4. *Reaſon.*
[k] Acts 4:20. Jerem. 20. 9.

5. The love which beleevers beare to Chriſt, provokes them to doe all they can for the enlarging of his kingdome; it fills mens heads with many projects and deſignes of that nature, and it makes them reſtleſſe in this particular, *Knowing the terrour of the Lord, we perſwade men* (ſaith *Paul*). *The love of Chriſt that conſtraines us*, The ſoule never thinkes it can doe enough for

5. *Reaſon.*
2 Cor. 5. 11. See v. 14.

for Christ, who formerly did so much against him, &c.

6. Reason.

6. Love and pitty to the pretious souls of men puts them on it. The [l] first and chief work of Faith is love, and there is no love in him to his neighbour that loves not his soule. Having found grace and comfort our selves, let us pitie others that are as yet strangers to Christ, unacquainted with that divine sweetnesse that is in him, and say to them, *Why will ye dye?* If there be any love to thy brothers soule, any pitie for his spirituall condition, allure him to taste the mercy and goodnesse of God to all that come by Christ to him.

[l] Gal. 5. 6.

Levit. 19. 17. & 2 Thess. 3: 15.

7. Reason.

7. Themselves have not the lesse, but the more by prevailing with others [m] to partake with them. *I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spirituall gift, that I may be comforted with you,* [n] So here. For

[m] Rom. 1. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 9. 6.

[n] *Nihil periculi est si intelligamus Paulum verè speraſſe à Romanorum fide ſuam quoque inſtaurandam.*

1. Christ Jesus is an inexhaustible fountaine, there is an unfathomable Ocean of sweetnes in God, enough to satisfie thee & all commers. When all the Elect which are a numberlesse number, shall have tasted divine sweetnesse here, and drunk their fill of those Crystall Rivers in glory; 'twere blasphemy to think there should be the lesse in God, still in Christ fulnesse dwels.

Rev. 5. 12.

The

The Sunne hath not the leſſe for filling all the leſſer veſſels of the Starres with light; So here, &c.

2. The beſt way to draw more abundantly out of this well, is to communicate to others, the ° more you improve and impart talents, the more talents ſhall be given you, but to bury one in the earth, is the way to have that taken from you. Beſides, as when others feed with you, this doth encreaſe your appetite, and draw down that which you would not have eaten alone; ſo at this heavenly banquet, the more the merrier, nay the better cheare. Much is to be gotten by communion with Saints; And a Saint cannot convince and reclaime another, but he betters himſelfe, and exerciſes his graces and gifts; and as a needle or a Weavers ſhuttle are the better for uſing, ſo are our graces, &c.

° Though both armes grow, yet that which a man uſeth is the ſtronger and bigger, ſo is it with our gifts and graces. *Trap.* on *Mat.* 25. 16. *pag.* 567. *Scientiarum ea vis eſt & natura, ut quo plus doceas eo doctior ac doctior fiat.* Bodin.

8. True grace and envie cannot ſleepe in one bed, nor reſt in one ſoule. There is no envie in ſpiritualls allowable. Hypocriſie and envie may be twins, but if thou haſt true grace, thou wilt not envie grace and gifts in others, but cheriſh thoſe ſparks, and encreaſe them as much as may be. Heare *Moſes*; *Would all the Lords people were Prophets*; John; *he muſt increaſe, but I muſt decreaſe*; See how well contented he was. One member doth not envy another for what it

8 *Reaſ.*

Numb. 11. 29.

John 3. 30.

p 1 Cor. 12.

is, hath, or weares, p We are all one body, anothers grace will not darken thine, but all together make one conſtellation.

9. *Reaſ.* q *Si angeli ſibi invicem in cœlo gratulantur dum vidēt reſtitui in gregem ſuum quod diffluxerat, nos etiam ejuſdem gaudij ſocios eſſe decet.* Calv.

9 Beleevers cannot but delight to make joy in heaven, to make Chriſt & the q Angels, and all the glorified Saints, to break out into ſinging and rejoycing. Why this is the work of Heaven, at the conviction and converſion of one ſinner. A coy ſinner cannot ſtoop and ſip of this nectar, but there is ſhouting in heaven, and loud muſick amongſt the Angells, as you ſee *Luk* 15. 10. If at the making of the world, as *Job* 38. 7. then much more at the converſion of a ſinner, which is the greater wonder, & at the making of *new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwells righteouſneſſe*, 2 Pet. 3. 13.

10. *Reaſ.* r *Nihil præſtantius aut magis optabile quam animam eripere e morte æternâ.* Calvin. in Jacob. 5. 20.

Laſtly, by conſequence r nothing finds ſuch acceptance and recompence with God as this. No uſury ſo gainfull as the winning of ſoules. *James* 5. 20. He that converts his brother, hath ſaved a ſoule from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſinnes. God will mention it to their praiſe and comfort another day: For if the workes of mercy towards the bodies of others, which are veſſells of dung, and breathing lumps of clay, ſhall yet be mentioned that day, as *Mat.* 25. 35. then much more ſuch as aimed at the good of others ſoules, which are Jewels of ſuch price, that one ſoule is more worth then

then the world. Surely this will hide a multitude of other failings, and this may bring many temporall comforts and bleſſings along with it.

To winde up this bottome in a word, here is matter of reproofe and duty.

1. Of reproofe to two ſorts of men;

1. To ſuch as are negligent in this duty. *All minde their own things, few the things of Chriſt*, and the ſoules of others. Every one takes up that wicked ſpeech of *Cain*, *Am I my brothers keeper?*

2. To ſuch as allure men to ſinne, earthlineſſe, and vanity. They ſay not with *David*, *taſte*, &c. but as children of the Devill they imitate their father, and are tempters to evill, ſaying: O taſte and ſee how ſweet ſin is, how good the creature is. Theſe are of the forlorne hope, that march undauntedly upon the mouth of hell, theſe ſhall be damn'd with a witneſſe. Here above others comes in the ring-leader in intemperance (every Town almoſt hath a king of drunkards.) Theſe perſwade and force men not onely to taſte but drink deep of that cup of devils; theſe carry the ſins of others to Gods tribunall. The hotteſt ſeats in hell are kept for theſe. [t] God is now plaguing the land for theſe ſins. Now they health it on their

1 *Uſe.*

[s] *Quærere quæ ſua ſunt eſt privatam utilitatem & gloriã quærere, et negligere communem utilitatem et gloriã Chriſti, ſeu evangelii* Eraſmus Sarcerius in *Pſal.* 1. 21.

[t] God hath plagued our drunkenneſſe with immoderate raine, which hath ſpoyled much corn, and is like to produce ſcarcity. The Lord hath turned our ſummer into winter;

and whereas Chriſt ſaid, *The harveſt is great, and the labourers are few*, wee may ſay, the labourers are many, the harveſt is little. Famine is a moſt fearfull judgement. *Lam.*4. 9, 10. *Ocyus torquet, lentius tabefacit, ſenſim occidit. Baſil. Ser.* 3. *contra div. avaros.* Two ſins chiefly produce this great raine and waters that have falne.

1. Our Starre-gazing and Prognoſtications which foretell theſe things. God ſuffers it to come to paſſe as a judgement on the Land for ſuffering ſuch things, & to harden people in the belief of them, ſome beleeving the Almanacks, have carried their corn wet into the barne, fearing more raine, and there it grows. See *Perkins* touching yearly Prognoſtications, third Volum, *pag.* 653 to 667.

2. Our gluttony and ſwiniſh drunkenneſſe, wee have fought againſt God with his bleſſings, and now he begins to diſarm us. For this floud of drinke within are come flouds of water without, this ſweeping raine, as *Solomon* calls it, *Pro.*28. 3. Let Magiſtrates therefore ſcatter our innumerable Conventicles of drunkards, let Miniſters ſtand in the gap and ſay, *Spare thy people, O Lord*; and let us all humble our ſelves under his mighty hand. Wee have deſerved ſhowres of fire and brimſtone from heaven.

knees (a ſacrifice to the devill) and force others to drink, as thoſe that thruſt the bottle to the noſe, *Habak.* 2. 15. But the time is at hand when they ſhall beg upon their knees for one drop of water, when they ſhall be fed with fire and brimſtone for ever. The very heathen ſhall riſe up in judgement againſt them, ſee *Eſter* 1. 8.

2 *Uſe.* 2. Of exhortation to all men to evidence the truth of their own converſion by alluring others to Chriſt, & perſwading them to taſte how good God is. There is a time for all things, lay hold on opportunities when put into your hands, to reprove the negligent, enlighten the ignorant, reduce the

the erroneous, revive the diſconſolate, and admoniſh the falne. To which is required knowledge. *Rom.* 15. 14. a foundation of grace in your own hearts, that you may ſpeake experimentally, and inwardly to them. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. elſe you may reclaime others, and be caſt-aways your ſelves. Finally, there is requiſite fit and ſutable addreſſes to ſtrong and weake Chriſtians, to civill worldlings, and ſuch as are openly profane, for one key will not open every locke, the wards are not all alike, ſo here, &c. Well, plucke up the loynes of your minde, reſolve to meete with difficulties and diſcouragements, if you ſet upon this worke; without prudence, reſolution, and patience, no good will be done. Though your endeavours prevaile not on all, they may on ſome (tis well if thou canſt melt but one, *James* 5. 20.) though not now, they may hereafter, it may be ſomewhat may ſticke by them, as long as they have a day to live, and ſo though not preſently, yet hereafter they may be the better, and glorifie God in the day of their viſitation, as 1 *Pet.* 2. 12. *q. d.* It may be on their death-beds; as *Joſephs* brethren remembred him in their ſtraights. In a word, though you prevaile not at all, your reward is with God. See *Iſa.* 49. 5. a place that hath much reviv'd me in the want of ſucceſſe. And ſo much alſo of that poynt.

[u] *Monica* gained her husband *Patricius* from being an impure *Manichee*, not by force of argument, but purity and chaſtity of life, ſaith *Auguſt.*

3 *Note.* 3. There is yet another poynt from the coherence of my Text with the words following, and that is this.

They that have taſted Gods goodneſſe are truly bleſſed, and ſhould at once truſt in God and feare him. But leaſt my porch ſhould be larger then my building, I ſee I muſt be briefe, and therefore

1. *Branch.* 1. *They that have once taſted the ſweetneſſe that is in God, are a happy people and truly bleſſed.* If mans *ſummum bonum* ſtands in communion with God, as Scripture (*Pſal.* 144. 15.) and experience demonſtrates, (for who ever found contentment at home, knocking at other doores? Then this muſt needs be a truth, *They that have taſted God are bleſſed.* And if ſo

1 *Uſe.* O how bleſſed are thoſe that have their fill and will of God in glory! if ſo much ſweetneſſe in a little drop, how much in the Sea? 1 *Cor.* 2. 9.

2 *Uſe.* Range not therefore after bleſſedneſſe in ſinne, or the creature, they muſt all ſay, tis not in us. As *Job* 28. 14. So here; A man can never gather figs of thiſtles; Seeke not the living among the dead.

2 *Branch.* w The Chaldee expounds it, *in his word.* 2. *They that have once taſted the goodneſſe of God, ſhould for ever truſt in him*[w]. God is unchangeable. He is ever the ſame God. Diſpenſations may vary, but God is the ſame. *They that know thy Name will truſt in thee,*

thee, Pſal. 9. 10. *The Lord hath heard me, and I will call upon him as long as I live*, Pſal. 116. 2[x]. But ſee a notable place, *Rom.* 5. 4. *Tribulation works patience, and patience experience*, (ſcil. of Gods relieving us in trouble) *and experience hope* (*viz.* for the future, and in new ſtraights) *and hope makes not aſhamed* (*i.e.* it makes a man lift up his head among the waves)

[x] *Beni dum ſpirant ſperãt inò cum expirant*, ſo *Job.* Though he kill me, I'le truſt in him.

If bare and naked promiſes are ſufficient to ſtay and ſtrengthen the ſoule in trouble, as *Pſal.* 119. ſo *Johh* 20. 29. Then much more performances. 1. *Reaſ.*

If our experiences help others, *Iſa.* 51. 9. *Rom.* 15. 4. then much more ſhould they quiet us, and cauſe us for ever to depend on God, and live on him. 2. *Reaſ.*

It meets with thoſe who cannot chew the cud when they are put into the pound (ſuch were unclean beaſts of old) in afflictions they forget to fetch up their former experiences. They are as much to ſeeke in troubles as if God had never ſhew'd them his face, nor been good to them. 1. *Uſe.*

O therefore review and husband your experiences of Gods goodneſs, to keep your poore hearts from ſinking in troubles and deſertions, and waylings of Chriſts face from you. 2. *Uſe.*

To which is requiſite Obſervation and Memory.

1. Obſervation of the wayes and works and proceedings of God with the ſoule. *Pſal.* 107. 43. and *Iſa.* 5. 12.

2. Memory, the laying up of the knowne and obſerved works of God; forget not his out-goings, and in-comings to thee. The Philoſopher ſaith, that experience is *Multiplex memoria.*

Now remembrance includes 4 things.

1. A committing to memory thoſe paſſages of providence, that have given us the ſweeteſt taſts of God and his love and goodneſſe.

2. A retaining [y] or keeping them in memory, as in a ſtore-houſe, that they ſlip not from us.

3. A recalling them to mind upon occaſion offered, bringing out things new and old.

4. A skilfull applying them to our own uſes and occaſions in a ſutable manner.

Queſt. How ſhall I doe, ſo to remember my former experiences of divine goodneſſe, that I may truſt in God for the future? Why,

Anſ. 1. Highly prize and eſteeme the gratious dealings of God with thee. Take a due eſtimate of every ſmile of Chriſt, which hath heaven in it, for we eaſily remember things we eſteeme highly. Conſult *Pſal.* 119. 129. and 16. *ver.* [z] One writing in defence of old age, ſaith, *Where is that old man, that forgets where*

[y] *Omnium rerum theſaurus & cuſtos eſt memoria.* Auguſt.

[z] Tull: *de Senect.*

where he lays his treasure? Where your treasure is, there will your hearts and mindes be also (saith Christ.)

2. Use continuall helps, such as these.

1. Write down your experiences in a booke yeare by yeare, and peruse them continually. When King *Ahasuerus* could not sleepe, he commanded his Records and Chronicles to be read, *Est.* 6. And when thy soule hath no rest, peruse this paper or little booke of experiences.

2. Christian conference, *Psal.* 105. 1, 2. compare your experiences with others.

3. Holy meditation, which being fixed on God, will be sweet. See *Psal.* 77. 11, 12.

4. Prayer, that the Spirit may be your remembrancer, *Joh.* 14. 26.

Well, by these meanes you may store up plenty of experiences, and by all [a] draw neere to God, and grow more familiar with Christ, more bold and confident, and feareless in future troubles.

3. They that have tasted Gods goodnesse must feare him, feare least they grieve him, and feare least they loose him. *Psal.* 130. 4. *There is mercy with God, that he may be feared.* And *Hosea* 3. 5. *They shall feare the Lord and his goodnesse in the latter dayes.* This is a filiall [b] feare.

Sin not therefore because God is good, this is the way to turne his sweetnesse into fury.

But

[a] Tis an old Proverb, *Sperare & expectare multos reddit stultos.* But this is certain, *Nunquam confusi Deo confisi.*

3 *Branch.*

[b] *Aliud est timere quia peccaveris, aliud timere ne pecces.* Philip. in Job.

1 *Use.*

2 Uſe. But ſay of God, he is ſo great I will not venture to diſpleaſe him, he is ſo good I will feare to forfeit him. But I have been too long in the coherence, let us now come to the words themſelves.

O taſte and ſee that the Lord is good.

4. Of the text it ſelfe. Wherein you have two generall parts, an exhortation, and an encouragement.

1. The diviſion. 1. The exhortation in theſe words:

O taſte and ſee.

2. The encouragement in the words following:

That the Lord is good.

1. In the firſt, the exhortation, you have

1. The manner, with an interjection, expreſſing the paſſion of that minde that utters it, *Oh taſte and ſee.* Oh! Tis a little word, but full of affections. *Oh! Taſte and ſee.*

2. The matter, or the exhortation it ſelf, *Taſte and ſee*; where

1. You have two diſtinct duties urged, *viz.* the exerciſe of two ſpirituall ſenſes, *viz.*

1. Taſting, *Oh taſte*, get an holy reliſh of God and the Word.

2. Seeing—*and ſee*, endeavour to get a glimpſe of God.

2. You have the golden linke that faſtens them together, *taſte* and *ſee*. As a man cannot ſee clearely till he taſts God, ſo he cannot taſte God,

God, till he see something of him, *Ignoti nulla cupido.* And as tasting without seeing will be blind devotion, so seeing without tasting will be naked speculation, *Ergo, Taste and see.*

In the second, which is the encouragement, you have three things, *viz.* 2.

1. The proper fountaine of goodnesse, *the Lord*; *The Lord is good.* He saith not that sin is good, or that the creature is good, for there is but one good, and that is God. See *Mat.* 19.17. *viz.* none absolutely good but God.
2. A lively description of God, *the Lord is good.* q. d. not onely just, holy, powerfull, & wise, &c. but he is good, mercy is his darling attribute, and God glories most in it, as *Exod.* 34.6. Mercy triumphs over justice. If you would describe God to the life, say he is good.
3. The application of all this to us, for you see this goodnesse must be tasted; as meat in the platter will not nourish us unlesse we taste it, so here God is full of goodnesse, but all this will be nothing to you, nay it shall be something against you, unlesse you taste it, unlesse by faith you apply it, and have interest in it.

Thus

2. The obſervations.

Thus you have the diviſion of the Text, now for the obſervations, thoſe which I ſhal inſiſt on are five.

1. *Doct.* All that exhort others, ſhould endeavour to work much upon the affections.

2. *Doct.* Sinners ſhould taſte of God, and venture to make triall of him & his wayes; Taſting implyes trying.

3. *Doct.* There is but a taſte of God in this life. Taſting is but taſting, not full ſatisfaction.

4. *Doct.* They onely that taſte can ſee how good the Lord is: Such onely as taſte communion with God in his wayes, and have experimentall enjoyments of God, can rightly ſee and diſcover his ſweetneſſe and goodneſſe.

5. *Doct.* The Lord in Chriſt is exceeding good unto all his Saints, yea he is not onely good in the concrete, but goodneſſe it ſelfe in the abſtract.

Of all theſe in order.

1 *Doct.*

Firſt, All that undertake to exhort others, muſt endeavour to worke upon the affections, (I ſhall not be long here.) This poynt you ſee is gathered from the manner of exhortation, which is by an interjection, ſetting forth the eagerneſſe of the ſpeaker, *Oh taſte and ſee.* And againe in the next verſe, *O feare the Lord*

you

you his Saints; The very heart of *David* (you see) is ready to leap out of his mouth. *Oh taste and see.*

Whence I observe, that all who exhort, &c. This interjection is frequently used in sacred Scriptures, setting forth the passions and affections of the soule, especially foure, *viz.*

1. Joy. *Deut.* 33. 29.
2. Griefe. *Jer.* 44. 4. *Mat.* 23. 37.
3. Love. *Psal.* 119. 97.
4. Desire, vehement desire, and so tis used here, and elsewhere, *Gen.* 17. 18. and *Deut.* 5. 29. and 2 *Sam.* 23. 15. and *Job* 6. 8. Strong desires and affections, breake out in passionate and melting expressions; For the tongue is the hearts interpreter, and out of the abundance within the mouth speaketh; but to come to the point.

That such as undertake to exhort others, and win them, should principally endeavour to work upon the affections.

Let us open the *Quare* and *Quomodo*, why they must endeavour so to doe, and how they may come to doe it.

1 *Quare*, why?

First, for the *Quare*, why this must be their great designe?

1 *Reas.*

The reasons are three.

First, The word which they unfold and urge, is very full of affections, of terrour to awe us, of love to woe us, of pitie to lament us,

us,&c. O what melting expressions are scattered there! Oh *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, &c. Luk*,24.32. *Did not our hearts burn whilst he opened the Scripture to us?* There be coals of fire in the Scripture to singe all your affections, and make your hearts to turne and burn within you, and your fingers to drop with myrrhe. *Is not my word like a fire, or hammer?* Fire is the most melting and stirring of all the elements, &c. See *Jer.* 5. 14. *Heb.*4.12.

Heb.4.12.

2. *Reason.* [c] *Quicquid facis cum hilaritate fac.* August.

Secondly, as the word is full of affections it selfe, so it lookes to be obey'd with full affections, 2 *Corinth.* 9. 7. God loves a cheerfull giver: he saith, *My sonne, give me thy heart. Quod cor non facit, non fit.* So that if we doe not stirre up the affections of others, the religion we beget in them, will be little better then formality, *Laodicea's* sin, *Rev.*3.15,16.v.

3. *Reason.* [d] In the *Greek* 'tis νωθροί, *viz.* slow paced.

Thirdly, men are blockish and dull in affections to embrace heavenly things: *They are dull of hearing, Heb.* 5. 11. There is a lumpish heavinesse, and a sottish stupidity, and a cursed carelesnesse that sits on the spirits of unregenerate men, in reference to any thing that good is, with *Gallio, They care for none of these things Acts* 18. 17. 'Tis not a small matter will move and stir men, and bring them to sit as on Nettles before us. We must make them care for these

theſe things, and ſcatter hell fire in their faces till they cry out, *What ſhall we doe to be ſaved?*

Secondly, for the *Quomodo*, how may we doe it? I anſwer, Foure things are required.

2. *Quomodo?* How?

1. Ability to ſpeak to the life: As a curious Painter limbs to the life, as if it were a living man indeed; ſo [a] a man muſt ſet out heaven, as if the people did ſee it with their eyes, and deſcribe Hell as if they were walking a turn among the damned. And if this will not work on mens affections, they are bewitcht, as *Gal.*3.1. *O fooliſh Galatians, who hath bewitch you, that you ſhould not obey the truth, before whoſe eyes Chriſt hath been evidently ſet forth and crucified? q.d.* Chriſt crucified hath been deſcribed and ſet out to the life in our Sermons (for that generation ſaw not his crucifixion on the croſſe.) Now to this is requiſite much [f] knowledge; A man muſt be well furniſhed before he can perſwade, exhort, inſinuate and winde into the hearts of people, *Rom.* 15.14. To utter ſeaſonable and ſuitable things fitly, cloſely, and deſcribe things to the life, requires much knowledge.

1. [a] *William Fenner* in a treatiſe of the affections. *Gal.*3.1. opened.

[f] *Quintilian* would have his Orator wel-nigh omniſcient; and ſurely Miniſters ſhould be διδακτικοὶ, which ſignifies being able as well as willing to teach.

2. Fulneſſe of affections: He that goes to work upon another, muſt be brim full of affections himſelfe (ſaith *Quintilian.*) *Acts* 17.34. you ſee *Paul* did ſo move the peoples

2.

peoples affections, that they clave to him & beleeved. How came he to do this? See verſ. 16. His ſpirit was ſtirred in him, *i. e.* *Paul* was greatly affected himſelfe, and ſo came to affect others. One candle being lighted, will light many. So 2 *Cor.* 2. 4. *I wrote unto you with many teares.* g *Pene quot ſyllabas, tot lachrymas* (ſaith one) he ſhed as many teares as he wrote ſyllables; he could hardly write for teares. O that we who are Gods Miniſters, could be thus affected! The Lord lay it not to our charge that we are not.

2 Cor. 2. 4. g *Non tam atramento quàm lachrymis chartas illevit.* Lorinus.

3. Godlineſſe h of life: *Ariſtotle* requires this in an Orator, That he be a good man. We muſt ſpeak feelingly and experimentally, as 2 *Cor.* 4. 13. *We alſo beleeve, and therefore ſpeak.* *Paul* exhorts *Titus* to *ſhew himſelfe a pattern in all things*, viz. Such muſt lead convincing lives, this is more winning then words. See 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. When *Elies* ſons were wicked, 'tis ſaid, *the people abhorred the offering of the Lord*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 17.

3. h *Gregory* ſaith of *Athanaſius*, that his life was a continuall Sermon, and wooing men for Chriſt.

4. Finally, even the voyce and geſture have ſome ſtroke in this.

1. A due carriage of the voyce, which (ſaith *Auſtin*) ſends an occult influence into the affections of men, *Phil.* 3. 18. *Of whom I have told you before, and now tell you weeping, they are enemies to the croſſe of Chriſt.* The Apoſtle ſpeakes to them with a weeping

ping voyce. Let not this be the main thing you look for: It is a brand on the Jewes that they were affected with [1] *Ezekiels* pleasant voyce, and little else. And even a rare and worthy *Moses* may be defective herein. But the meanest voyce hath some hidden grace in it.

1 Ezek. 33. 32.

2. A decent [k] action, so not over-affected, will work upon the hearers. *Ezekiel* is bid to stamp with the feet. And *John Baptist* was *totus vox*, all voyce, *Matth.* 3. 3. *The voyce of a cryer in the wildernesse.* He was all voyce, that is, saith one, his eyes spake, and his hands spake, and his body spake. The Prophets stretched out their armes to the people in fulnesse of affection. It is said *Paul set his eyes on Elimas that wicked Sorcerer*, Acts 13. 9. saying, *O thou child of the Devill, and enemy of all righteousnesse, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?* His eyes spake as well as his tongue; you see how a man may work on the affections of others.

[k] *Quintilian. Gerardus Iohannes Vossius. Orator.* Instit. lib. 6. cap. 11. p. 511. *Vide* Ar. Montan. lib. 8. Antiq. Jud. *ubi varias gestuum significationes è sacris sedulo colligit.*

First then, this may serve to warn men of our Calling especially, to be zealous in dispensing the word; Our Sermons must not be onely informing, but inflaming Sermons. We must not rub itching eares, but shake drowzy hearts; not preach to please them with novelties, or puzzle them with nicities, but fire them with love to the truth,

1. *Use.* *Persuasioni humanæ opponit ostensionē spiritus quæ vim quandam supra modū efficacē ad persuadendū animos habet.* Meyer. in 1 Cor. 2. 4.

and care of ſincere obedience. In a word, not to ſet forth our ſelves, but Jeſus Chriſt in his lovelineſſe to poore ſinners, that they may be ſick of love to him, and languiſh with deſires after him. This muſt be our deſigne, our delight.

2. *Uſe.* Secondly, it followes likewiſe, that people muſt ſo heare, as that they may be rouzed and melted under the word.

This is done ſix wayes:

1. Firſt, by due preparation before hand: this ſoftens the Wax that it may take the impreſſion, &c. Many leap out of their neſts into the Aſſemblies, without ſeeking God, or perfuming their ſpirits before they come; and that is the reaſon they ſit like images, unconcerned, under the Word; Preparation tunes the heart, oyles the wheeles, whets your zeale, and kindles your affections.

2. Secondly, by [1] attention, liſtning to the matter as well as ſound of words, elſe you be no more affected then the Whelps or Birds that hear a ſound as well as you. *David* ſaith, *I will liſten what God will ſpeake.* Chriſt ſaith, *He that hath eares to heare, let him heare.* q.d. Let him with intention and greedineſſe of ſpirit receive the Word. 'Tis ſaid, *Luke* 2. 20. *The peoples eyes were faſtened on Chriſt when he taught them.* A good help againſt diſtraction, and an argument of their attention. Third-

[1] Matth. 11. 15 *Chriſtus electos Dei hortatur, quibus perforatæ ſunt aures, ut attenti ſint ad conſiderandum Dei arcana, ne obſurdeſcant cum incredulis.* Calvin.

Thirdly, ſubmiſſion and ſtooping to God, that your hearts may come under the hammer of the Word, come with broken and bleeding ſpirits, and as it were, with Ropes about your neckes, *That you may* [m] *receive with meekneſſe the ingrafted word*: Say with *Paul*, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* 3. [m] Jam. 1. 21.

Fourthly, repreſentation: Conceive you ſaw thoſe things with your bodily eyes, which we ſet out by Metaphors: As when we tell you ſin is a plague-ſoare, imagine you were ſhut up, and had running ſoares upon you, and ſaw the paſſengers baulk you, and ſtop their noſes, &c. How would you then ſkream, and cry out with *Paul*, *O* [n] *who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* And ſo here when we pray you to taſte divine ſweetneſſe, conceive you were at a rich feaſt, to which men come with edg'd appetites, and eat the fat, and drinke the ſweet, &c. This would work much on the affections. 4. 1 Reg. 8. 38. [n] Rom. 7. 24.

Fifthly, ejaculation: Caſt up deſires after God, [o] breath after the enjoyments of Chriſt, fling up divine ejaculations: O that this truth might transform me, and worke with power! Now when all wiſh the ſame thing, what can hinder the work? We ſay as in the Text, *O taſte and ſee*, O be perſwaded to heare God, and delight in God! 5. [o] Pſal. 84. 2. and 42. 1.

O that this day there might be joy in heaven over the converſion of ſome ſoul! Wel, a believer under the word falls a wiſhing too, [p] *O that my wayes were directed according to thy Statutes!* O that I had the ſilver wings of a Dove to flye into the boſome of Chriſt! To conclude, God and Chriſt fall a wiſhing over you too (in whoſe will and power it is to doe you good) [q] *O that there were ſuch an heart in you, that you would feare me, and keepe my ſtatutes!* [r] *Oh that thou hadſt known in this thy day* &c. Now I ſay, when there is wiſhing on all ſides, what ſhould hinder execution?

[p] Pſal. 119 15. and 55.6.

[q] Deut. 5.29.

[r] Luke 19.42.

6. Sixthly, repetition, meditation, and conference about the Word at home. [s] Thoſe beaſts which chewed not the cud were unclean. So here. *Pſa.* 62. 11. *God hath ſpoken once, twice have I heard this, That power belongs unto God.* So here, God ſpeakes once to you in the Sermon, you muſt heare it twice in repetition at home. Thus the noble [t] *Bereans* ſearched the Scriptures daily, whether the things they heard of *Paul* and *Silas*, were ſo or no. And thus I have done with that poynt.

[s] Deut. 14. 8. Levit. 11. 7.

[t] Acts 17. 11.

2. *Doctr.* Sinners ſhould be induced to taſte God, to venture upon him, and make triall of him and his wayes. Taſting implies trying.

In the Doctrinall part we ſhall inquire

1. What

1. What this taſting Gods goodneſſe is?

2. Whether unregenerate men may have this taſte?

3. Why all muſt ſtrive for experimentall taſtes of God?

First, what this taſting is? I anſwer, there is a corporall and a myſticall taſte. 1. Enquiry.

1. There is a Corporall taſte, 1 *Sam* 14 43. It may be defined thus, 1 There is a corporal taſte.

[u] Taſting is one of the moſt neceſſary exterior ſenſes, diſtinguiſhing ſuch ſenſible objects as are taſtable. So that to taſte is to chew and conſider what 'tis we receive before wee take it down for nouriſhment. The taſte eaſily diſtinguiſhes between that which is bitter and ſweet, ſtale or new. It quickly gives ſentence what is pleaſant, and what is offenſive. The curious palate ſerves to reliſh or diſreliſh things. So 2 *Sam.* 19. 35. to taſte is to try and diſcern. Now thus Gods goodneſſe is not to be taſted; unleſſe occaſionally by taking a riſe from the creature to the Creator, and by eying his love in outward mercies: And ſo even in bodily food, a Beleever taſtes how good the Lord is; he ſees God as a Father providing food convenient for him: and he taſtes Divine goodneſſe in every morſell of bread he eates. *Whether you eat or drinke* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *or what ever you doe, doe*

[u] *Ariſtotle.*

[w] *Intellectus comparatur guſtui, quia intellectus noſter judicat de re ut ſenſus ſaporibus.* Erhard. Schnepfius in Pſal. 34. 6. pag. 204.

Mat.6. 31.32. 1 Cor.10.31. *all to the glory of God.* q. d. See and admire his goodneſſe in theſe things, and be ſure you be ſober and temperate in the uſe of them.

But this corporall taſte is not meant here.

2. A ſpirituall taſte.

2. There is a Myſticall and Spirituall taſte, which is to examine, try, conſider, and reliſh divine goodneſſe, and partake of its ſweetneſſe and joy.

How we taſte Gods goodneſſe.

But how be we ſaid ſpiritually to taſte the goodneſſe of GOD? I anſwer, Five wayes.

1. In Ordinances.

First, in Divine Ordinances, which God hath appointed for this end, *viz.*

1. The Word.

1. The Word, by hearing or reading of it, a beleever x taſts God in the Word, and findes a world of ſweetneſſe there. See *Pſa.* 119. 103. *How ſweet are thy words to my taſte, yea ſweeter then hony to my mouth?* The Word is exceeding ſweet, and none but beleevers can taſte it. For as *Ezekiel* ate the Roll, *Ezek.*3. which was in his mouth as honey; ſo a beleever doth ſpiritually y feed on the Word, and if the threatnings of the Word are ſweet to them (for that Roll was full of curſes, *Ezek.*3. 10.) becauſe they are aſſured they belong not to them, and that God ſhall gain glory to his truth and juſtice by them, Oh then how ſweet are the promiſes, which are called

x Heb.6.4. *Guſtus verbi nos ſuaviter delectat*, Calv.

Ezek.3.3. y *In ſacris Scripturis abūdat & quod robuſtus comedat, & quod parvulus ſugat.* Fulgentius Serm. de Confeſſ.

led the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, and *exceeding great and pretious promises?* When all the world cannot cheere up a drooping heart, the thought of a promise doth the work: For the promise is full, free, and firm. Now if the promise is so sweet, how sweet is the performance? How sweet is the enjoyment of Christ, in whom all the promises *are* [z] *Yea and Amen?* 2 Pet. 1.4.

[z] 2 Cor. 1.20.

2. Prayer. A Saint tastes God, and lives upon God in prayer; by this he draws out of the well of salvation, which is deep, but very sweet. *David* saith, he is [a] *nigh*, but *Paul*, he is *rich to all that call upon him.* And Christ saith, *Your heavenly Father will give good things to them that ask him*, viz. by, and in prayer, they shall taste of his goodnesse. For, *making their requests known to him, the very peace of God which passeth understanding, shall keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*, Phil. 4. I here appeale unto beleevers. Have not you known the time, that you have touched the hem of Christs garment, and tasted of the joyes of heaven in prayer, and holy enlargednesse of heart, when thou hast wrestled with God? Have you not seen heaven cleft, & Christ sitting at Gods right hand. There is no beleever, but frequently tastes the goodnesse of God in and by prayer: For God saith not, *Seeke ye me in vain?*

2. Prayer.

[a] *Prope est omnibus qui ubiq; adest, nec refugere eum possumus si offendimus, nec fallere si delinquimus, nec amittere si colamus*, Amb. in Psalm. 119. *Illum maximè fovet qui appropinquat sibi.* Idem.

3. The Seales. [b] *In baptiſmo ſignũ eſt aqua, res autem ablutio animæ per ſanguinem & ſpiritum Chriſti, & carnis mortificatio*, Calv. in 1 Pet. 3. 21. [c] *Baptiſmus pactum ſcu fœdus gratiæ, quod init inter baptiſmum nobiſcum Chriſtus*, Bulling. in Act. 2. 38. [d] *Quid igitur? Panem vides præterea nihil: ſed audis teſſeram eſſe corporis Chriſti, ne dubita impleri à Domino quod verba ſonant, corpus quod nequaquam cernis, ſpirituale eſſe tibi alimentum.* Calv. in Mat. 26. 26.

3. The Seales. *viz.* 1. [b] That of Admiſſion into the Church; there we taſte Gods goodneſſe in [c] culling us out of the world, & planting us in the garden of his Church. Thereby our ſinnes are waſhed away, and we are baptized with the holy Ghoſt, and with fire. 2. We taſte divine goodneſſe in the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Lords Supper, we feed upon Chriſt in thoſe Elements of Bread and Wine. There Chriſt crucified is emblematically ſet forth, and ſacramentally received, and the heart raiſed up to taſte the goodneſſe of God, *Mat.* 26. [d] *This is my Body, and this is my Blood*, q. d. Theſe outward Signes and Seales are moſt ſure and certain pledges of my Body and Blood, which I doe as truly give to be ſpirituall food, as I give the Bread and Wine to be bodily food to every beleever; 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. This was long ſince promiſed, *Iſai.* 25. 6. *The Lord will make a feaſt of fat things, of wine on the Lees well refined.* So *Prov.* 9. 5. Here Chriſt, as the Maſter of the Feaſt bids us welcome, ſaying, *Eat O friends, yea drink abundantly my beloved.* Here the the hungring and thirſting Soule hath refreſhment and ſtrength from heaven: here it is put in mind of Chriſt, and all that he hath done and endured for us: Here it hath heavings and violent liftings of heart towards God. And Chriſt ſaith, *Open your mouthes wide, and*

and I will fill them with good things. Here the Soule hath meetings with God, and is convinc'd of his love, and the truth of his promises. For this is a *Seale of the righteousnesse of Faith, Rom.* 4.11. It confirmes the covenant of grace to us. You see how we taste the goodnesse of God in the Lords Supper.

4. In Society and Communion, and Christian conference with the Saints, and speaking often to one another of the things of Heaven, *Mal.*3.16. For thereby we taste of others gifts, which are given them for others to profit withall, and *they will be ready to comfort us with the comforts wherewith they have been comforted of God,* as 2 *Cor.*1.4. Indeed much of God may be seen and tasted in communion with the Saints. 'Tis a piece of heaven upon earth; 'tis the joy of Christians: *All my delight* (saith *David*) *is in them that excell in vertue.* Communion with the Saints is often made a step to fellowship with Christ, as 1 *Iohn* 1.4. [c] *That yee may have communion with us, and that also our communion may be with the father.* Throw a dead Charcoale among the living, and it will soon sparkle and kindle: First indeed sparkle, *viz.* Thou wilt dislike their wayes & principles; but afterwards kindle, and glow with love to God and his truth, when you have lookt better into them, and tasted

4. Conference

[c] *Hæc itaque societas, cujus meminit Johannes, est Ecclesia Christi, quæ in symbolo dicitur sanctorum communio, habet autẽ maxima bona spiritualia. &c.* Thomas Naogeorgus in 1 Johan. 1. 4.

Simile.

tasted Gods goodnesse among them.

5. In f Meditation. This is a Saints pastime, it recreates and perfumes the tyred spirits: 'tis a Ladder by which the Soul clambers up to heaven: 'tis a duty is ever at hand, *Prov.* 6. 22. *When thou goest it shall lead thee, when thou sleepest it shall keep thee, & when thou awakest it shall talk with thee.* When thou art alone, nay in the darke, when travelling, &c. On all occasions you may let out your soul in meditation, when other duties cannot be performed: Nay, when you sleep you may be medling with this duty; For having communion with God in the day, and closing thy eyes with some meditation, even thy dreames may be of the love of God, and the glory of heaven, as the experiences of the Saints can witnesse. Meditation it enters us into the first degrees of those heavenly joyes, and imparts to us some beginnings of the vision and fruition of God: It enables us with *Moses* to discerne, as we are able, some glimpses of God, that our faces shine with purity and divine splendor. By this we are ravished with *Paul*, and are catcht up into paradise, and in the twinkling of an eye are driven (as in a fiery Chariot) into heaven. By this with holy g *Stephen* we see the heavens opened, and Jesus sitting at the right hand of God. Indeed admirable are the

5. Meditation.

f *Gustare est cogitare.* Erhard. Schueptius Comment in Psal. 34. 6.

g *Soli Stephano conspicua fuit Dei gloria, impiis enim qui eodem loco stabant hoc spectaculum latebat. unde sequitur non in cœlis, sed potius in Stephano editum fuisse miraculum.* Calvin in Acts 7. 56.

the effects of divine meditation. It confirms our knowledge, *Psal.* 119.99. It strengthens our memory, *Ps.* 63. 6. It enflames our love (as bellowes the cynders) *Psal.* 119.97. and *Psal.* 39. 3. It cherishes affiance in God, as *Psal.* 119. 147, 148. It maintains a true and son-like feare of God, *Psal.* 4. 4. It hushes and quiets the soule in afflictions, *Psal.* 119. 23. 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. *Thinke it not strange.* q. d. It matters much what our thoughts and meditations are in trouble. It promotes prayer, *Psal.* 143. 5, 6. *Eccles.* 5. 2. and praising God. This tunes the harp, *Psal.* 63. 5, 6. It weanes and sequesters the heart from the world. It spiritualizes our discourse, *Psal.* 77. 12. *Matt.* 12. 34. If there be fire on the hearth, some sparks will flie out at the chimney. In a word, it casts a secret influence on the life, *Josh.* 1. 8. *Psal.* 1. 3. and 119. 15. Purge the fountaine, and the streames will run pure.

The life is eafily transformed, when the heart is new moulded. What shall I say? [h] Meditation is the very life of our life, as a Heathen could say and see by the light of nature. It is the food of our soules, the fuell of our zeale, the spur of our devotion; The soule that can meditate on God, is never lesse [i] alone, then when alone; for his fellowship is then with the Father and his Sonne Jesus Christ. It delights to walke in these groves,

[h] *Cogitare est vivere.* Tull. Acad. Quæst. lib. 1.

[i] *Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus.*

groves, and fold the armes in theſe ſhadie bowers of ſolitary but divine meditation, where it heares the Nightingale of a good conſcience warble melodiouſly, &c. [k] *My meditation of thee ſhall be ſweet*, ſaith *David*, *and in the multitude of my thoughts, thy comforts delight my ſoule.* q. d. I taſte much of God in this duty, and it feeds me with many ſweet morſells of contentment. *Pſal.* 104. 34.

[k] Pſal. 104. 34.

Queſt. But how doe beleevers taſte the goodneſſe of God in divine meditation? I anſwer,

Anſ. 1. By meditating of all his glorious perfections, eſpecially the boundleſſe dimenſions of his ſweeteſt attribute, which is his mercy. So [l] *taſte and ſee* (*viz.* conſider a little with me, ſaith *David* here) *how good the Lord is.* q. d. By meditating dive into the Ocean of divine ſweetneſſe, and contemplate of him that is beauty and goodneſſe it ſelfe.

[l] *Hic locus hortatur omnes homines ut velint cogitare de bonitate Domini.* Erhard. Schnepfius in Pſal. 34. 6. Pag. 204.

2. By meditating [m] of the works of God, the creatures of God, and the doings of God. Conſider others deliverances, and your own. Surely *David* aimes at this here, *O taſte and ſee how good the Lord is.* q. d. Oh conſider all my deliverances, and eſpecially that from the hand of [n] *Achiſh* (as in the title of the Pſalme) and conſider your deliverances and mercies from day to day. Meditation like the Bee hovers up and downe,

[m] *Nolite omnia beneficia Dei ſine guſtu deglutire, aut maligne perpetuâ oblivione ſepelire, ſicut faciunt impii. Sed adhibete palatum, videte & judicate.* Molerus in Pſal. 34. 5. Pag. 275.

[n] 1 Sam. 21. 12, 13.

downe, and will taſte of every flower in the garden, and admire God in all his creatures, and in all his providences. I have been the longer on meditation, becauſe *David* chiefly ayms at this in the Text. Thus you ſee the firſt thing opened. Wee taſte God in his Ordinances, *viz.* the word, prayer, ſeales, conference and meditation.

Secondly, Wee taſte God by faith, and particular applications of Chriſt unto the ſoule. For where there is taſting, there muſt be touching and applying the food [o]. In other ſenſes, as ſeeing, hearing, there muſt be a *medium* between the object and organ, not ſo in taſting. The thing taſted muſt be touched. Tis ſo here in this ſpirituall taſte, there muſt be an application of Chriſt, and union with him by [p] faith, and a grounded perſwaſion of his goodneſſe to us, or wee can never taſte him: To ponder Gods goodneſſe in himſelfe and to others is not all, but to bring it home and weigh his goodneſſe to me, as, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. and *Gal.* 2. 20. Oh tis this raiſes ſo ſweet a reliſh in the heart [q]. For what would it profit thee that God is good to others, and not to thee, marrow to others, and gall to thee, (ſurely this will but adde to thy torment.) Now faith applyes that goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe that is in God, to a mans own ſoule in particular: And this lyes plainly in the Text.

2. Wee taſte God by faith.

[o] *Ariſtot.*

[p] *Qui fidit invocat, qui invocat exauditur & ſalvatur: Hinc ille guſtus.* Muſc. in Pſal. 34.

[q] *Hunc verò guſtũ in Chriſto percipi ſignificat Apoſtolus ut certè nullam unquã extra Chriſtum requiem (& dulcedinem) inveniat.* Calvinus in 1 Pet. 2. 3.

O taſte and ſee how good the Lord is, bleſſed are they that truſt in him. q. d. O be perſwaded to taſte God, for they muſt needs be bleſſed, that beleeve in him. You ſee he makes taſting and truſting (or beleeving) all one. Now though God have never ſo much power and goodneſſe in him, yet till the ſoule hath intereſt in him, it hath no reaſon to truſt in him, for God to ſuch is a conſuming fire. One that never taſted God by faith may ſay he is a tower and a Saviour, &c. [1] But onely the beleever can ſing that ſong, *My goodneſſe, and my fortreſſe, my high tower, and my deliverer, my ſhield, and he in whom I truſt.*

[1] Pſal. 144. 2.

3. In partaking of divine influences. 2 Cor. 3. 18.

Thirdly, Wee taſte Gods goodneſſe by partaking of divine influences, *viz.* the gifts and graces of the Spirit: Theſe are certain rayes and ſparkles of his goodneſſe ſhed in upon the heart, to make it reſemble God in Goodneſſe.

So then.

1. There's a taſte of Gods goodneſſe, when wee partake of the gifts of the Spirit, as, *Heb.* 4. 6. There it is called *taſting of the heavenly powers*; Twas a fruit of Chriſts aſcenſion, *to give gifts unto men* [f].

[f] Eph. 4. 8.

2. And more eſpecially, wee taſte Gods goodneſſe, when wee partake of divine graces, which are the very ſtamp or image of the divine nature [t]. *Cant.* 2. 3. *As the ap-*

[t] *Notandū eſt naturæ nomen hic non ſubſtantiam, ſed qualitatem deſignare.* Martin. Luther in 2 Pet. 1. 4.

ple

ple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sonnes. I sate under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love[t]. Now this fruit of Christ, which was so sweet to her taste, is nothing but the graces of God, which are called *the fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22. *Mat.* 3. 8. 10. You see regeneration is tasting of God. 'Tis called (you know) *partaking of the divine nature, and being changed from glory to glory*, &c.

[t] See *Ainsw.* in locum.

4. We taste Gods goodnesse in outward behaviour and reformation, when we make tryall of him and his wayes, and turn our feet into his testimonies; When men search and examine things well, and resolve to try if the wayes of God deserve to be evill spoken of. 1 *John* 4. 1. *Try the spirits, whether they be of God or no*: and so we say to sinners here, [w] Try the wayes of God, whether they be sweet or no. Men are apt to *speake evill of things they know not*. See *John* 4. 10. So I say here. Oh if you did but know what ravishing sweetnesse were in God and his wayes, you would soon taste and try them. Methinks what *David* said to God, that God saith to sinners. *Search me and prove me, see if there be any way of wickednesse in me.* God saith: *Are not my wayes equall?* Is not my yoke easie? Doe but try and disprove me,

4. Wee taste God in outward reformation.

[w] *Requiritur ut gustemus*, i. e. *experimentum capiamus de Deo quod bonus sit. Sicut enim nemo certo, quanta sit dulcedo mellis cognovit, nisi qui gustat, ad eam modò divinæ bonitatis cognitionẽ non poterit habere, nisi qui expertus est.* Musculus in Psal. 34. 8. P. 309.

me, and then testifie against me, all this to put us on the tryall, to prevaile with us, but to taste and see how good he is. *Job* 34. 3. *The eare tryeth words, as the palate tasteth meates; Let us know among our selves what is true.* So the soule by tasting and trying is able to discerne between things that differ.

5. In actuall discoveries of sweetnesse in God.

5. We taste Gods goodnesse in experimentall and actuall discoveries of sweetnesse and fullnesse in God, when wee have tryed and now finde soule-filling and satisfying delight and comfort in God; when the soule rejoyces with *joy unspeakeable and glorious*, when it hath got *earnests of the Spirit*, and evidences of glory [x]; when it sees God smiling on the soule, now indeed it hath tasted how good the Lord is; now it calls out for more of God, *O stay me with flagons, and comfort me with apples, for I am sicke of love.* Now it longs to have its full and will of God, and to be even swallowed up of God, when he shall lead us into his wine-cellar, and shall draw up his sparkles of glory into one confluence and constellation round about him; and *we shall be filled with all the fullnesse of God.*

[x] Grace is a beginning of glory; it may be compared to the golden chaine in *Homer*, whose top was fastned to the chaire of *Jupiter*.

Now when a sinner hath got such discoveries of God, and appearances of Christ, that it longs for these things, then indeed it hath tasted with *David*, *how good the Lord is.* You

You ſee what this ſpirituall taſte is.

2d *Inqu.* Now ſecondly, wee muſt inquire, whether unregenerate men and meere hypocrites may be acquainted with theſe taſts of Gods goodneſſe, and yet ſtill continue in the ſtate of nature? Now to this I anſwer.

1. *Anſ.* Heb. 6. 4. opened. 1. Wicked men may ſeeme to goe very farre in this work, as *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. Tis evident, this is ſpoken of unregenerate men. Becauſe the Author ſaith, they may fall away, and never be renewed (which cannot be ſaid of them that have true grace, *Rom.* 11. 29.)

But there you ſee an unregenerate man may deceive himſelfe, and others, and goe very farre; for,

1. *They may taſte of the heavenly gift, viz.* the common gifts and influences of the Spirit, as great knowledge, ſome kindes of faith, hatred of ſome ſinne, and a ſeeming zeale for God, as *Judas* (before his diſcovery) had.

2. They may *taſte of the good word of God* by feeling ſome ſudden flaſhes of joy and delight under the Word, as *Herod* and *Felix* did.

3. They may even *taſte of the powers of the world to come*, that is, be taken up with the contemplation and admiration of the Saints bleſſednеſſe in heaven. Thus *Balaam* deſired by all meanes, to die the death of

y *Solos quidem electos Deus ſpiritu regenerationis dignatur, ſed hoc non obſtat, quo minus reprobos etiã guſtu gratiæ ſuæ aſpergat, irradiet eorum mentes aliquibus lucis ſuæ ſcintillis, officiat eos bonitatis ſuæ ſenſu, verbumq; ſuum arcuq; eorum animis inſculpat.* Calvin. in Heb. 6. 5.

the righteous, that his laſt end might be like theirs. All this is held forth in that one place, *Heb.* 6. But if we range through the Bible, we ſhall finde many other particulars touching this thing, *viz.* how far an hypocrite may goe in theſe taſts of God and Religion.

I finde eight [2] ſteps, more are named.

[2] *Alexander Groſs* in his fiery pillar mentions 14 ſteps. *cap.* 5.

1. They may abound with knowledge in the myſteries of godlineſſe, 2 *Pet.* 2. 21. 1 *Cor.* 13. 1, 2. *Luk.* 12. 47. *Mat.* 4. 6.

2. They may be moved and troubled at the denunciation of judgement, and fit quaking under the Word, *Acts* 24. 25. *id.* 5. 33. *James* 2. 19.

3. They may be perplexed in minde about ſinne, and that both before committing it, as in *Mark.* 6. 26. and afterwards, *Mat.* 27. 3, 4. *Gen.* 4. 13. *Exod.* 9. 27.

4. They may pray themſelves. 1 *Kings* 21. 27. 29. *Iſa.* 1. 15. *Mat.* 6. 7. nay earneſtly deſire others to pray for them, *Acts* 8. 24. So did *Simon* that was in the *gall of bitterneſſe, and bond of iniquity.*

5. They may make open profeſſion of the ſtricteſt wayes of godlineſſe, *Iſa.* 38. 2. *Acts* 13. 50. and 26. 5. *Mat.* 25. 7.

6. They may joy, and take delight in the Word, *Mar.* 6. 20. *Mat.* 13. 10. *Heb.* 6. 5. *Luke* 4. 20. 22. *Ezek.* 33. 31, 32. *Iſa.* 58. 2.

7. They may reforme in many things,

ſo

ſo 2 *Kings* 10. *Luke* 18. 11. *Acts* 6. 20. and 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21.

8. They may hold out with Chriſt in very great troubles, [a] nay ſuffer even death in the cauſe of Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. How many Jeſuites have worne the *Tyburne*-tippet (as Father *Latimer* phraſes it) rather then renounce the Popes ſupremacy.

[a] As *Servetus Manzius*, Biſhop *Fiſher*, and Fryer *Forreſt* did.

You ſee hypocrites may aſcend many rounds in *Jacobs* ladder, but the greater is their fall into hell at laſt, for

2. Notwithſtanding all this, they are voyd of ſpirituall life and ſenſes, like that ſtatue of a man, which they ſay *Albertus Magnus* was thirty yeares about, that by reaſon of ſprings and devices within, could walke up and downe, and ſpeake articulately, which ſtill was voyd of life, ſo here, &c. Some ſprings within reſulting from ſelfe-love, ſome ſcrews of oſtentation may produce in the hypocrite ſpeech and motion in the wayes of God, but being deſtitute of ſpirituall life, he muſt needs be voyd of ſpirituall ſenſes, and ſo he is a ſtranger to the taſte in the text.

2. *Anſ.*

But wherein lyes the difference between the taſte that may be in reprobates, and the true taſte that is in beleevers? I anſwer,

Queſt.

1. Wicked men may ſeeme to taſte, and do not. Many act a part, and ſeeme to delight in God and religious duties, and yet

Anſ.

finde a ſecret loathing and wearineſſe within, but now beleevers have reall taſts of God, and that joy which they expreſſe, is but the over-flowings of inward delight and comfort.

2. They may have ſome generall taſtings of the myſteries of Chriſt, but they cannot taſte or know thoſe myſteries with ſound application as theirs.

3. That taſte in wicked men is but for a [b] ſeaſon, it cannot be laſting: They taſte for a fit of a river running by them, but not of a fountaine before them.

[b] *Eſt igitur aliqua etiã in reprobis cognitio, quæ poſtea evaneſcit, vel quia minus altas radices, quam oportebat, egit, vel quia ſuffocata degenerat.* Calvin. in Heb. 6. 5.

4. Such may taſte, but never digeſt, they are not the better, there's no change within, but their ſoules are *cages of unclean birds*, but now beleevers are transformed by theſe taſts of God. What ſhall I ſay?

A ſincere heart out-ſtrips an hypocrite in many things, for he hates ſin univerſally, *Pſal.* 119. 104. He exerciſes holy duties in publique and ſecret conſtantly, *Job* 27. 6, 8, 9, 10. *Acts* 14. 16. He obeys the whole will of God chearefully, *Pſal.* 40. 8. and 119. 128. 1 *John* 5. 3. They endeavour the glory of Chriſt above their own good, *Rom.* 9. 3. *Luke* 14. 26. With *David* they deſire to win others, and they call upon them to taſte God, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. *Luk.* 22. 32. But ſuch are eſpecially buſie with their own hearts, continually bemoaning the deceitfulneſſe

ſulneſſe of them, and deſiring ſincerity with much earneſtneſſe, *Pſal.* 119. 23, 24. You ſee a beleevers taſte is much different from the taſte that is in hypocrites, who may have *a name to live*, and a name to taſte, but are indeed dead and ſenſleſſe.

Laſtly, let's inquire why ſinners ſhould labour for experimentall taſts of God? I anſwer: 3d *Inq.* *reſ.*

1. Becauſe God and his wayes are undeſervedly evill ſpoken of by Mammoniſts, and prophane ones, who are not competent judges; for Moles cannot judge of colours, and they ſpeake evill of things they know not, nor ever tryed. Much is ſpoken againſt God and Religion in all places, as though he were a hard Maſter, reaping where he ſowed not, and his wayes tedious, irkſome, and uncomfortable; It is not wiſdome therefore to go by hearefay. Sinners ſhould try God, & beleeve their own experiences, ſo ſhould they finde him to be goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe it ſelfe, taking upon him the moſt tender relations, &c. and all his [c]wayes, to be wayes of pleaſantneſſe, his burthens light, and like thoſe burthens of Cinnamon, that refreſh thoſe that carry them through the deep ſands of *Arabia*, and all his [d] yokes to be eaſie, *ſo that in the very keeping Gods wayes is great reward*, Pſal. 19. 11. Many bring an evill report on *Canaan*, but behold

[c] *Grave dum tollis ſuave cũ tuleris.* Greg. in Ezek. lib. 2. Hom. 7.

[d] *Quid enim levius eo onere, quod non ſolũ non onerat, ſed portat omnem cui portãdi imponitur.* Ber. epiſt. 72.

behold theſe faire cluſters; The graces of God are grapes gathered from that Vine above. *O taſte and ſee how good the Lord is*, and how good grace is.

2. *Reaſ.* 2. Wee ſhall never know the true ſweetneſſe of God and his wayes, till wee taſte and try them; thus in the Text, *taſte and ſee*; till you taſte, you can never clearly ſee how good the Lord is. And who (my brethren) would be ignorant of the ſoules *ſummum bonum*, and range up and downe ſeeking contentment, when 'tis onely to be found in a neglected Meſſiah? Thy poore heart will not onely be voyd of content, but ignorant of the proper fountaine, till thou haſt taſted God, and then thou wilt rate thy ſelfe, for trying no ſooner. This is certain; for

3. *Reaſ.* 3. The comfortable experiences of all the Saints, who never [c] repented for ſo doing, ſhould invite us to taſte and try. *True repentance is never to be repented of*, 2 Cor. 7. 10. *Job* curſed the day of his birth, but no man was ever heard to curſe the day of his new birth, ſaith one upon thoſe words. Hypocrites have play'd the Apoſtates, but they never taſted God. Theirs was but *cadaver fidei*, or the picture of grace. See 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. They might be wens or botches on the body, but they never were members. No, never did any repent of their taſting.

2 Cor. 7. 10. *Trap in locum.*

[c] Concerning this taſting there is no repentance, unleſſe that it was nooſooner, as 1 Cor. 15. 8.

taſting God, and venturing on Religion; though perſecution hath immediately attended their profeſſion. Men of our time, calling, ranke, and parts, have chearefully waded through all the difficulties following Religion [f]. There's a multitude of examples round about you, taſting and reliſhing divine ſweetneſſe. The Wiſe men had but one ſtarre to guide them to Chriſt, but wee have all the aſſembly of Gods Saints, the company of renowned [g] Martyrs, many precious Chriſtians, as ſo many millions of ſtarres, to allure and conduct and enlighten us to Chriſt; All which will certainly riſe up in judgement againſt us, if we follow them not. *Mat.* 12. 41, 42. Beſides, others could never prize Chriſt, and rejoyce in him thus, if there were not a glorious fullneſſe, and ſoule-quieting ſweetneſſe in him; There's that in Chriſt that can ſatisfie every longing ſoule: Let this make us conſider and inquire what Chriſt is, and taſte his goodneſſe.

[f] *Nec ratione componimur, ſed omnes conſuetudine ab ducimur.* Sen. Epiſt. 122.

[g] *Diutius durant exempla quam mores.* Corn. Tacit. Hiſt. lib. 4. cap. 17.

4. Either you muſt taſte of Gods goodneſſe, or fury; you muſt taſte of one [h]. There is a cup in Gods right hand of that is ten thouſand times ſweeter then Nectar. Of this he intreats you to taſte, and many will not; But then there is a *cup of trembling* in his left hand, into which the dregs of his fury are wrung out, and of this cup they

4 *Reaſ.*

[h] *Ingens telum neceſſitas.* Livius.

they ſhall taſte and drink deep to eternity. You muſt all have to doe with God one way or other, as children with a father, or as traytors with a Judge. God can raiſe himſelfe glory out of your aſhes. If you will forſake your own mercies, & ſhut the dore againſt the offers of grace, juſtice ſhall break in upon you as armed men, and deliver you to the tormentors. [1] Behold, I ſet life and death, hell and heaven, ſweet and bitter, before you this day, you muſt taſte of one. Make therefore (with *Mary*) a wiſe and judicious choice; Taſte and ſee how good the Lord is, and then you ſhall never taſte and ſee how terrible he is, how juſt he is, how powerfull he is for the deſtruction of the creature, yet ſo that it may ever live to feele what infinite power, juſtice, and wiſdome can inflict upon it to all eternitie.

[1] Deut. 30. 19.

5 *Reaſ.*

Fiftly and laſtly. If you taſte here, you ſhall have your fill [k] hereafter, for what is grace but glory begun, and what is glory but grace finiſhed? Now indeed you can get but a glimpſe of God. There's much coldneſſe and darkneſſe in you, and you [l] know and taſte but in part. A thouſand things ſtep in to break off your communion with God. But the day is at hand, even at the dore, when thou ſhalt ſee God face to face, when you ſhall ſwim in thoſe chryſtall rivers of pleaſure*: in a word, when you ſhall

[k] *Habemus vitæ futuræ pignus.* Theophylact.

[l] 1 Cor. 13. 12.

* *Neque enim erimus otioſi ſpectatores, ſed participes gloriæ.* Bern. in Diverſ. 1.

ſhall have your fill and will of God. In the meane time, this taſte will at once prepare you for that fullneſſe, and aſſure you of it, and make you inſtrumentall for the lifting up Chriſt upon his throne, and glorifying God in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation, which muſt needs be joy and delight to every gracious heart in this life. Phil. 2. 15.

Let us come now to the improvement of this uſefull poynt in Application.

Firſt, ſomewhat muſt be ſpoken by way of juſt reproofe to four ſorts of people, and 1 *Uſe.*

1. To all ſuch as taſte not how good the Lord is, and how ſweet his mercies, wayes, and ordinances are, with [m] *Gallio* they care for none of theſe things, they ſavour not, they relliſh not the things that are of God, &c. 1. [m] Acts 18. 17.

The laſt, may ſome ſay, was ſpoken of *Peter*, a childe of light, an eminent Apoſtle, &c. *Object.*

'Tis moſt certain, *Mat.* 16. 23. The Saints in ſome things are darke, and ſometimes they ſeeme to be utterly voyd of any ſpirituall reliſh in the beſt things, for a Chriſtians palate may be downe, he may have his ſeaſons of deadneſſe, as the beſt gardens have their winters, and the Sun his eclypſes. And in this poſture, all the precious ordinances are juſceleſſe to the ſoule: It ſtill goes to prayer, but not with wonted affe- *Sol.*

ctions;

ctions; to the word but no reliſh; to the Table of the Lord, but now no taſtings of the things ſignified: And this is the greateſt burthen to a gracious heart in the whole world: it mourns under deadneſſe, and laments theſe indiſpoſitions, and is weary of this temper [n].

Queſt. But how may the ſoules palate be ratled, and its reliſh reſtored?

Anſw. [o] Bitter things are wont to do it. You muſt feed on Chriſt, the Paſchall Lamb with the bitter hearbs of compunction, and Goſpel-contrition. Make your moan to God, grieve that you can grieve no more, complain to God of your dryneſſe of eyes, as *Iſaiah* of his leanneſſe; find out the *Achan* that ſtole this wedge of gold, the *Jonas* that cauſes this tempeſt within thee. O mourn for that ſin eſpecially that is the cauſe of Gods withdrawing. Theſe bitter hearbs may recover thy ſpirituall reliſh.

But now if this meet with the beſt, that for a ſeaſon are deprived of this taſte, how much more with [p] them that never had it? The time is yet to come with many millions of ſouls that ever they taſted the Lords goodneſſe in any mercy, in any duty. I have read of one that had no bodily [q] taſte at all. Nay, I knew one of a very ſtrong and healthy conſtitution, that had little or no taſte.

[n] *Peccata non nocent ſi non placent.* Aug. de Tem. p. 18.

[o] *Nemo intelligit quam bonus ſit Deus, niſi qui variis tribulationibus eſt exercitatus. Nã dulcia non norit qui non guſtavit amara* Hen. Mollerus in Pſal. 34. pa. 275.

[p] *Intellectualibus animæ ſenſibus non pollent.* Euthym.

[q] *Lazarus (vitrivorax vulgo dictus) nullo prorſus guſtu præditus erat, nullam in edendo voluptatem perſentiebat,* ſaith Realdus Columbus in his laſt book quoted by Nierembergius Hiſt. nat. lib. 3. cap. 9

taste. This is the condition of thousands in spirituall things.

Now if you put this question to me, why many cannot feele such sweetnesse in holy duties as others doe, why they passe from duty to duty, and taste nothing of God in the Ordinance? I answer, that indeed it will not be amisse to discover unto you the proper causes of this temper, and they are six.

1. Some want the Ordinances in the life and power; They cry out for bread, and there is none to give it them, *Rom.* 10. 14. Such as want the ordinances, will never taste the sweetnesse of God: *For faith comes by hearing.* [r] Some live neere the Arctick pole, and six months together see not the light of the Sun. These are to be pitied, but much more such [s] as enjoy not the sunshine of the Gospel, and will never taste Christ. 1.

r *Strab. Geog.*

s Prov. 29. 18.

Not but that strong beleevers (as *David* here) in the want of ordinances, enjoy most of God, who is not tied unto meanes, and then they lye down and drink at the fountain where the water is sweeter and plentifuller: but (mistake not) I speak of unregenerate men who want the ordinary meanes of conversion, and beleevers that neglect the ordinances. Now if in these cases there is want of the ordinances, no wonder

Heb. 10. 25.
1 Thess. 5. 20.

wonder if people taſte not, as otherwiſe they might, the ſweetneſſe and goodneſſe of God.

Next, others are guilty of ſluggiſhneſſe and negligence under the meanes. Many Chriſtians are oft reſtrained in the taſtes of the ſweetnes of Gods favour and preſence, becauſe they are not carefull enough to attend upon him in the uſe of ordinances: They beſtow little paines, few ſtrugglings with their hearts; they heare, and pray, and read, &c. all in a lazie and perfunctory manner. No wonder therefore ſome taſte not ſuch raviſhing ſweetneſſe as others, for they uſe not like paines and diligence to ſearch out the comfort of the Word. For as rich Minerals are not gotten on the ſuperficies of the earth, but men muſt ſweat and dig deep into the bowels of the earth to finde them. And as the ſweetneſſe of a kirnell is not taſted till the ſhell be crackt, nor the goodneſſe of marrow known till the bone be broken; even ſo it is here. The ſweetneſſe of God, and the rich comforts of the word, are not taſted nor felt by them that look but ſlightly and ſuperficially into them, but are at no paines to ſuck the breaſts of Conſolation, which are the promiſes, and labour would overcome all things.

2. We muſt not make Gods ſervice ἐξ παρέργου, a lazie buſineſſe. This was a precept of *Pythagoras*, *Dulcia non meruit, qui non guſtavit amara.* *Erubeſcat humana pigritia, plus vult ille dare quam nos accipere.* Aug. Ser. 29. de ver. Dom. *Labor omnia vincit.*

3. Again, ſome have diſtempered and vitiated

tiated palats, and no wonder Angelicall viands are not pleaſant to them. To a ſick man that which is ſweet ſeemes ſoure and ungracious; ſo it is here: For beſides that ſome have the taſte of pleaſures and profits, and the luſts of the world in their [u] hearts, when they come to duty, where they ſhould reliſh divine ſweetneſſe; to whom Chriſt ſaith, they ſhall not, becauſe they cannot and will not taſte of his Supper in *Luke* 14. 24. and *Matth.* 13. 22. Others dream of a ſeeming ſweetneſſe in formes and pictures and poſtures, and ſuperſtitious worſhip, which the Prophet calls *Feeding upon aſhes*; and now theſe are ſnatcht from them, their religion (which conſiſted in ſuch things) is alſo gone. So that now they are as people that have loſt their [w] God, they can reliſh nothing elſe, nor diſcover any ſweetneſſe in pure ordinances. *Iſai.* 65. 11. you read of theſe, *They prepare a Table for the Troop, and they furniſh the drink offering unto that number.* q. d. There are Reliques of idolatry, and ſuperſtitious doings, and will-worſhip among them. Now ſee the thirteenth verſe, *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord) my ſervants ſhall eat, but you ſhall bee hungry; they ſhall drinke, but you ſhall be thirſty; they ſhall rejoyce, but you ſhall be aſhamed.* q. d. They ſhall have communion with me, and taſte of my goodneſſe, whilſt you are ſtran-

[u] *Currus bovem trahit ſi ratio pareat affectui.* Lucian. mortuorum Dialogo. tom. 1. p. 257.

[w] Judg. 18. 24. So here.

ſtrangers altogether unacquainted with me. Others are ſo taken up with [x]forms of godlines that they taſt little of God in any duty, they play the Parrots with God; what is this but mocking of him, & cheating a mans own ſoule? No greater ſtrangers to God then formaliſts, more hope of prophane ones then ſuch, ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 21. 31. Thus you ſee the palats of men may be vitiated and diſtempered, and prepoſſeſt with other things, ſo as they cannot taſte the goodneſſe of God in a promiſe, which is compared to wine on the lees well refined. Now as a man that hath eaten luſhious food, cannot taſte nor reliſh the beſt wine, ſo it is here, &c.

[x] *Aſcanius* his Parrot could ſay all the Creed: and another Parrot being ſeized on by a Kite, could repeat that piece of his Letany, *Sancte Thoma ora pro nobis.* How many nominall Chriſtians doe thus ſtick in formes, and play the Parrots with God duty.

? Theſe will never take divine ſweetneſſe in any

4. [y] Many are engaged and intangled in wicked company, in holineſſe-contemning and Chriſt-diſreliſhing ſociety, which is a ſnare and muzzle unto them, that they cannot taſte the goodneſſe of God. *Prov.* 9. 5, 6. There you'l ſee there be ſome that taſte not of Wiſdomes banquet, becauſe they leave not the way of the fooliſh. [z] All ſenſe in ſpirituals is curb'd, if not extinguiſhed by carnall and cooling company, who (as you ſhall ſee anon) have learn'd of Sa-

4. [y] *Vide Ioſeph Bentham* of ſociety with the Saints.

[z] Bad company will make thee bad, and then declare thee ſo. For *qualiſcunq; quis fuerit, cum taliſe conjungit.* Amb. ad virg. devotam.

'Tis not good to be at the Devils meſſe, though ones ſpoon be never ſo long.

tan

tan to oppoſe beginnings of goodneſſe. See Epheſ. 5. 11. intimating you cannot have fellowſhip with unfruitfull workers of darkneſſe, but twenty to one you'l have fellowſhip in their workes alſo; For can a man touch pitch and not bee defiled? The experiences of many Saints can witneſſe, that carnall company is cooling and enſnaring.

Next, ſome are delivered up to a ſpirit of ſlumber. God deales in judiciall wayes of blinding and hardening their hearts, ſo that they are voyd of all ſpirituall ſenſes, as *Rom.* 11. 8. Like thoſe Aſſes in *Hetruria*, that feeding upon Henbane would lye for dead. Nay, unregenerate men are not only faſt aſleep, but [a] *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, and what taſte hath one that is aſleep, or dead? 5.

[a] Epheſ. 5. 14.

Laſtly, God doth reſerve theſe taſtes as the onely portion of his own children, and therefore marvel not though the common multitude attain not to it. [b] *Pſal.* 36. 8. *They ſhall be ſatisfied with the fatneſſe of thy Houſe.* They and none but they who are Gods children: to others God is a ſealed Book, or incloſed well. Divine goodneſſe is Childrens bread, and Dogges ſhall not eat of it. 6.

[b] *Vocat guſtum doni cœleſtis, quæ ſupra naturam & mundum,* Chr. Hoſman in Heb. 6. 4.

2. As it meets with ſuch as taſte not the goodneſſe of God; ſo with ſuch as ſeek for delight 2.

[c] *Blunts* voyage to the Levant.

delight and ſatisfaction in earthly comforts. The *Turkes* [c] muſick is any ſound, ſo ſome patch up a delight out of every vanity. This is certain, except you reliſh Chriſt and his love in the creature, you'l [d] find no more taſte then in the white of an egge. [e] They that have skim'd off the very cream of the creature, as *Solomon* did, have been like thoſe that have gone to a Lottery with a head full of hopes, but returnd with a heart full of blankes. And therefore as *Samuel* ſaid to *Saul*, *Why ſhould a Kings heart be ſet upon Aſſes?* So ſay I, Why ſhould a Chriſtians heart be ſet upon trifles, winged vanities? They are Phyſitians of no value; miſerable comforters are they all, when thou commeſt into diſtreſſe; and yet how many ſeek for contentment in theſe periſhing things, nay oft think they find it, like [f] them in the Prophet that dreamt they ate, but all this while they are deceived, embracing with *Ixion*, a cloud in ſtead of *Juno*. Theſe taſte how good the creature is, not the Creator. Others likewiſe come under this reproofe. *viz.*

3. Such as are ever and anon taſting ſin, to ſee how good that is, which may be ſweet in the mouth (as ſome poyſons are) but gall in the belly. [g] *Knoweſt thou not, O man, that ſinne will be bitterneſſe in the end?*

[d] Job. 6. 6.
[e] *Neſcis quale tegat ſplendida vitra malum.* Reynolds vanity and vexation of the Creature.
[f] Iſai. 29. 8.
3.
[g] 2 Sam. 2. 26. Prov. 9. 4.

end? People will be nibbling at Satans baits, though with the momentany pleaſure they ſwallow the hook of Gods eternall vengeance.

[h] Let our good fellows that are ever taſting of the Cup, remember *Dan.* 5. 2. 5. whilſt *Belſhazzar* taſted the wine, fingers were ſeen writing on the wall, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharſin*, i. e. *Thou art weighed & in a ballance, and thy kingdome is taken from thee.* And that very night was the ſot ſlain. God ſcores up every ſuperfluous glaſſe that goes down thy throat, and the ſame night thou mayſt be ſent to hell to beg for one drop to coole the tip of thy tongue.

Some will ſay, they drink but a little, &c.

But to ſit and ſip, or but to taſte the cup with Drunkards, is unlawfull. [i] For loving to eat and drink between meales at unſeaſonable times, is made a ſinne of thoſe Princes, *Eccleſiaſtes* 10. 17. Drinking is made one of the luſts of the Gentiles, as well as drunkenneſſe, and hee is accurſed that eats and drinkes with the drunken in *Matth.* 24. 49. *viz.* Such as ſit by them, and ſip with them, and but kiſſe the cup; For this conſents unto their ſinne, and countenances their villanies, when you ſhould reprove them, and complain of them. See 2 *Par.* 20. 37.

1.

[h] *Vide* Aug. Ser. 231. de tẽp. Baſil. hom. in Ebr, & Ludovici Creſollii Myſtagogum, lib. 4. ca. 29 ſect. 5. pag. 2005. 2096.

Obiect.

Sol.

[i] *Vide* Harriſ. in Iſai. 5. 11. *Prima cratera ad ſitim pertinet, 2ª ad hilaritatem, 3ª ad voluptatẽ, & 4ª ad inſaniam.*

2. Next, you that taſte of thoſe ſtoln waters (for ſo [k] uncleanneſſe is called) remember *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge.* Heb. 13. 4. Nay, he plagues them here ſpiritually, *Prov.* 2. 19. and outwardly, *Prov.* 6. 16. 33. *And their bones ſhall be filled with the ſins of their youth.* Some cry, *Caute ſi non caſtè*, but God that is their Judge, ſees them.

[k] *Iob. Downam* treats of it, and *Preſton* on Col. 3. 5.

3. [l] You that by oppreſſion taſte of unrighteous gain, remember God will plead the cauſe of the poore, whoſe faces you grinde, and that your monies ſo gotten, ſhall periſh with you, *Prov.* 14. 31.

[l] See the Caſuiſts of Reſtitution.

4. You that taſte the ſweet Name of God often in your mouthes, but 'tis by lewd and cuſtomary [m] ſwearing and curſing, know *the Lord will not hold you guiltleſſe that* dare *take his Name in vaine.* Surely your *tongues are ſet on fire of Hell.* This of all other ſins the moſt unprofitable, all Religions condemne it, and therefore ſuch ſhall be damned with a witneſſe, and then they'l have their fill of curſing and blaſpheming to eternity.

[m] See *Lombard*, lib. 3. *Fo. Downam*, and *Walter Powel* againſt Swearing.

5. You likewiſe that unpreparedly taſte the ſacramentall Elements, [n] know 'tis ill playing with edg'd tooles: the Devill rides aſtride the bit of bread down your throats, *and you eat and drink your damnation, not diſcerning the Lords Body*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 27. 29.

[n] See *William Fenner* of this ſinne.

And

And ſo of all other ſins, you cannot taſte the ſin and eſcape the ſmart.

4. And laſtly, terror to ſuch as hinder others from taſting how good the Lord is. And as ſome in a way of ſuperſtition ſpeak of Gods creatures: ſo others in a way of prophaneſſe ſpeak of Gods wayes, *Touch not, taſte not, handle not*, Col. 2. 21. Have not thou to doe with preciſe ones and wayes, let Miniſters lungs faile in exhortation, and their eyes in expectation, but taſte not, if you love your peace, purſe, or pleaſure. 4.

Thus as *Herod* endeavoured to kill the Babe Chriſt; ſo theſe ° *Lulla's* watch to ſmother grace in the cradle; they ſeek by all meanes to coole, enſnare, divert, and diſcourage ſuch as begin to hanker after God, and caſt a favourable eye on Religion, ſaying, *Touch not, taſte not, handle not ſuch preciſe and factious doings*: But the hotteſt place in hell is kept for ſuch ſeducing diſcouragers. See what Chriſt ſaith, *Matth.* 23. 13. *Woe unto you that ſhut up the Kingdome of heaven: for ye neither go in your ſelves, nor ſuffer others that are entring, to goe in.* Theſe are compared in a Latin ᵖ Proverb, to a Dog in the Manger, that will not himſelfe taſte the hay, or provender, nor ſuffer the Cattell to come neere it, that have a mind to it, but lies ſnarling at them.

° *Lulla*, an Hag that uſed to hurt little childrē, which made the nurſes cry, *Lulla abbi*, now by contraction *Lulla by*.

ᵖ *Canis in præſepi.*

This is the lively picture of Seducers, and Diſcouragers; they will not taſte the goodneſſe of God themſelves, nor yet permit others to doe it. Theſe are the Devils Factors, and he will pay them their wages.

Paul deſcribing the Revelations of Chriſt to his ſoule, ſaith, and *immediatly I conferred not with fleſh and blood*, Gal. 1. 16. that is, with carnall reaſon (ſay ſome) which is an evill counſellour for the ſoule, *Rom.* 8.7. But I rather think, that by fleſh and blood is meant evill men, as divers [q] Expoſitors conclude. So then in that nick of time, when he began to taſte God in converting love, he would not conſult with ſuch at *Damaſcus* as might rather hinder then forward him in the worke: For this doe all wicked men left the goodneſſe of others ſhould diſcover or moleſt their wickedneſſe.

[q] *Martin Luther* and *Perkins* on the place.

2 *Uſe.*

2. *Uſe.* To inform us in the true reaſon of all that rage and fury, that boyles up in the ſpirits of men and women againſt God and his wayes, *They* [r] *ſpeak evill of things they know not, nor ever taſted*, Jude 10. This made them crucifie Chriſt, *Acts* 3.17. They are ſottiſhly ignorant of that reall worth and ſweetneſſe that is in God and Religion, and hence comes all their rage and foame againſt ſuch things. If men that are now as furious as Lyons and Tygers, did but make

[r] *Scientia non habet inimicum præter ignoratum.*

make triall of holinesse, and understand things aright, they'd be as tame as lambs, as *Isai.*11.6. When Christ offers to wash men from their sinnes, they cry out with *Peter, Thou shalt never wash my feet*: but when they begin to see his love, and taste his goodnesse, then, *Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and my head*, Joh.13.9. In a word, men are not so averse before tasting, as they are greedy afterwards.

3. *Use.* Somwhat by way of triall and examination, whether you have tasted divine goodnesse and sweetnesse, yea or no. The effects of this taste are three, Regeneration, Estimation, and Exultation. 3. *Use.*

1. Regeneration and vivification of the soule, and infusions of celestiall quicknings: This taste will frame thee to be a new creature, producing an unfained change in the heart, and bringing the spirit to a continuall care of pleasing God. Thus the word is called, *the savour of life unto life*, 2 Cor. 2.15,16. A man cannot taste God and remain in a dead condition. Some boast of Revelations, but have they a principle of life? are they purged from their filth? doe they walk close with God? 1.

2. Estimation of God above all earthly thing, preferring celestiall before sublunary sweetnesse: All will be counted dirt and dung to Christ, *Phil.*3.8. or as some render 2.

it, dogs meat to Chriſt, *viz.* courſe and contemptible food after ſuch junkets. The ſoule will eſteeme Chriſt, as the people did *David* more worth then [r]ten thouſand, or as [s] *Naomi* did *Ruth*, better then ſeven ſons. [t] *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt*, ſaid *Lambert* lifting up ſuch hands as he had and his fingers ends flaming; A good heart prizes God in Chriſt above all the world. For as the ſhining of the Sun drownes the Starres, ſo the unconceivable ſweetneſſe of Chriſt, turns other ſweets (which the ſoule admired before) into [w] bitterneſſe; And if the ſoule meet with any ſweetneſſe, any content in earthly things, it ſtill admires God, and cannot but infer, If the creature be ſo ſweet, how ſweet is the Creator? If the viaticum be ſo pleaſant in my journey, how glorious will the feaſt be at home? Have you ſuch thoughts of Chriſt? You indeed have taſted the goodneſſe of God.

3. [x] Exultation and delight, ſpringing from the love of complacency (as the ſchools call it) when the ſoule is loſt in a deſired labyrinth of ſpirituall enjoyments, and the longings of the ſoule are ſhuffled with the breathings of the Spirit; When the ſoule doth acquieſce, repoſe, feaſt and ſolace it ſelf in the ſweet fruition of Chriſt, in whom fullneſſe dwells, and all that the ſinner deſires now is, that he may be able to

y manage

[r] 2 Sam. 18. 3.
[s] Ruth 4. 15.
[t] *Acts & Monuments.*

[w] As the Prieſts of *Mercury* eating their figgs and honey cryed out, *Sweet is truth*; ſo here, &c.

[x] *Ah illis qui guſtarint, mirâ cum dulcedine percipitur vita nova.* Mar. Luther. in 1 Pet. 2. 3.

y manage his joyes, and that his heart may not be too little for his comfort, and so breake with the longing it hath after God, but that it may be content to live a while in banishment, and wait with patience till the marriage day in heaven. Oh here's a soule that is crowded with glorious thoughts of Christ, and many times knowes not whether it be in the body, or out of the body. *Psal.* 36. 8. *They shall be satisfied with the fatnesse of his house, and in thy light shall they see light.* This tasting is an earnest of heaven, and the first fruits of z glory, and therefore well may such sing and leap for joy, and then say, *Returne to your rest, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with you,* Psal. 116. 7. *Sept.* They joyfully take their a recumbency in the bosome of Christ. Were you ever acquainted with these joyes (for no Christian hath them continually) and hath the God of hope fill'd you *with joy and peace in beleeving,* thou hast tasted how good, how sweet the Lord is. Heare what b *Lawrence Saunders* the Martyr said unto his wife before his death. *Deare wife, riches I have none to leave behinde wherewith to endow you after the worldly manner, but that treasure of tasting how sweet Christ is to hungry consciences, (whereof I thank my Christ, I doe feele part, and would feele more) loe that I bequeath unto you, and to the rest of my beloved*

y *Beatitudo hominis est gustus bonitatis Dei.* Scultetus Id. Typ. Psal. 34. Pag. 272.

z *Bona conscientia maximè semper præbet solatium*; Euthym. 'Tis a continuall feast.

a *Gustus doni cœlestis totum hominem recreat.* Christo. Hosman in Heb. 6. 4.

b *Acts & Monu. fol.* 1361.

in Chriſt, to retain the ſame in ſenſe of heart always; Pray, pray. I am merry, and I truſt I ſhall be, maugre the teeth of all the devills in hell, and ſo I reſign me to my Chriſt, in whom I know I ſhall be ſtrong as he ſeeth needfull.

A diverſion to mourners, cloſe-mourners for the withdrawings of Chriſt.

Droop not diſconſolate ſoules, you that with *Mary* ſeek Chriſt ſorrowing, you'l find him in the Temple; Attend the meanes, live upon a promiſe, call to minde your former experiences. And [c] as women reckon from the firſt ſtirring of the Embryo, though afterwards for ſome weeks they feel not motion; ſo doe you; did you ever feel any ſpirituall motions within, any holy deſires and pantings after God, any joy and delight in him, doubt not but *Chriſt is formed in you the hope of glory.* Chriſt ſometimes is in the ſoule, as the ſoule in the body of him that is aſleep, which lies as a ſenſleſſe & helpleſſe lump, yet ſtill the ſoule is there. [d] Chriſt withdraws his preſence, that thou maiſt prize it, and the longer he ſtayes, the ſweeter will his diſcovery and returne be at laſt. Be not therefore like the Panther, that lets goe that which he gets not at three jumpings, but rather like the [e] wheele in a Water-mill, the more violently 'tis driven away, the more ſwiftly it turnes upon the ſtreames. Give God no reſt, till thou haſt reſt in him; and then 'tis ſufficient anſwer that thou haſt a heart to continue praying.

[c] *Mulier fœtũ conceptum non ſemper molitãtem ſentit, ubi tamen ſemel & iterum ſenſit prægnantem ſe eſſe non ambigit.* Spin. de Inſtit. Chriſti.

[d] *Diu deſiderata dulcius obtinentur, cito data vileſcunt.* Aug. de verb. Dom. 5.

[e] *Rota ab unda rejecta in amnem revolvitur.* Sal.

ing. See what may be the cauſe of this diſtemper, and endeavour to lament and remove that, and again I ſay chew the cud of your former experiences, and with *David* remember the dayes of old, *Pſ.*143.5. Thou haſt formerly taſted cõmunion with God, ſay, Lord if thou meaneſt to damne, wherefore didſt thou ſhew me ſuch things? I am not able Lord to trace thy footſteps, or underſtand thy wayes. O ſhine upon my prooping graces that are ready to die. Return, O Lord, how long? O put me into a condition of glorifying thee, and confirming others, 'tis thou muſt ſpeake peace, friends, Miniſters, promiſes cannot doe it without thee. If thou art ſilent, who can comfort me, and if thou ſmileſt what can diſturb me? Oh therefore paſſe before me in thy glory, and ſuffer me once more to taſte thy loving kindneſſe, ſo ſhall my heart dance for joy, and heaven ſhall ring of praiſes. *Ejaculatio.*

And having thus done, wait, wait I ſay on the Lord, admire the leaſt dawnings of refreſhing, and behold he that ſhall come, will come and not tarry one moment longer then to fit thee for his preſence.

Well now ſuffer the word of Exhortation which I put to all of you, and eſpecially ſuch as are in the ſtate of nature. Oh taſte and ſee that the Lord is good. Oh be perſwaded *4. Uſe.*

ſwaded in the bowells of Chriſt Jeſus, to conſider things well, and make tryall of God and his wayes. O taſte divine goodneſſe. You'l never repent of it, but wiſh you had taſted ſooner. The greater thy ſinnes are, the more need to taſte of mercy. Take ſome motives to the work.

1 *Motive.*

1. If you taſte other things bodily, the pleaſure is ſhort and vaniſhing; All the pleaſures of this life are but for a moment (even the twinkling of an eye to eternity) but no pleaſure ſo ſhort as the [f] gluttons: And therefore that great Epicure *Philoxenus* wiſhed at a feaſt, that he had a neck as long as a Crane, that ſo his meat might be longer in taſting and going downe. Nay, as the pleaſure is ſhort, ſo ſaciety breeds lothſomneſſe, and the moſt pleaſant things become moſt [g] unpleaſant. But now if once you taſte divine goodneſſe, it ſhall be a laſting pleaſure, and thou ſhalt have the reliſh in thy ſoule as long as thou liveſt, to ſtay and comfort thee in deſertions; And the [h] more you feed upon Chriſt, the more appetite and deſire wilt thou have after him. The ſoule can never loath this Manna, nor nauſeate divine [i] ſweetneſſe.

[f] *Vide Clem. Alex. Pædag. lib. 2. & cap. 1. Aſelli marini cor in ventre,* ſo a gluttons heart, nay his God. *Phil.* 3.19. is in his belly. *Euſeb. Nierembergius Hiſt. nat. lib. 1. & cap.* 19.

[g] *Prometheus* told *Mercury* that *Sales in cõvivio advitandã temulẽtiam & edacitatẽ* were cõmendable. *Lucian in Promet. Tom. 1. p. 166.*

When men are perſwaded to intemperante, to feed & drink without feare, 'tis *inimica amicitia.* Auguſt. ſer. 231. de Temp. *Epulis noſtris interſit Chriſtus.* [h] Be drunk with love, *Cant.* 5.1. and the Spirit, *Eph.* 5.18. [i] *Magnum enim diſcrimen inter delicias corporis & cordis.* Greg. in Evang. Domin. 2. Tr.

2 God

2. God invites and allures you to taſte him, it ſhall be no preſumption, *Iſa.* 55. 1, 2. *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come buy and eate wine and milke, and let your ſoule delight in fatneſſe.* And *Rev.* 22. 17. *Let whoſoever will come and take of the waters of life freely.* Chriſt would willingly have ſinners taſte of his love, and ſmell to every flower in his boſome; he ſtretches out his armes all the day long, and would fain gather you into his embraces. 2d *Motive.*

3. Kings have their taſters, and ſo have you, as [k] Phyſitians taſte the cordialls, ſo wee deſire to be examples, and goe before you in holineſſe, to demonſtrate there's no danger, nor ill taſte in the wayes of God. We beleeve and therefore we ſpeake; and as S[t] *Paul* ſaith, we ſhould be able to *comfort others with the ſame comforts, wherewith we are comforted of God,* 2 Cor. 1. 14. Wee ſhould be loth to enjoyne you any thing but what we endeavour to practice our ſelves, [l] and indeed there is no ſuch way to prevaile with others to taſte divine goodneſſe, as by falling to our ſelves. 3d *Motive.*

[k] *Potionē prius bibit Medicus, nè bibere timeret ægrotus.* Auguſt. in Pſal. 98.

[l] *Plus Plato ex moribus quam ex verbis Socrates traxit.* So Seneca. Epiſt. 60.

4. Conſider what the damned would give that they might be capable of taſting divine goodneſſe; if *Judas* had a thouſand worlds, and they would be taken, he would part with them all for one houre of the day of grace, to get a taſte of mercy; *Dives* (in the 4 *Motive.*

the Parable) begs but in vaine [m] for a drop or two of water to coole his mouth. He deſires not to taſt the water of life, but a drop of common water that runs downe in torrents among us. But God will not let the damned taſte ſo much of his goodneſſe as that comes to, who yet in this life are woed to taſte of the richeſt nectar, and they will not. Now therefore turne not from his ſacred breathings, but know the things belong to your peace, & ſeek the Lord whilſt he may be found, before the day of grace be finiſht, for then though all the glorious Saints and Angels of heaven ſhould downe upon their knees and beg for one ſmile upon you, for one drop of mercy, God would turne away from them, and ſweare you ſhould never enter into his [n] reſt, never be offered to taſte his goodneſſe any more; Then may you have wiſhings and wouldings to return, but all your faint purpoſes [o] ſhall vaniſh as the early dew before the Sun. God will harden their hearts as he did the heart of *Pharaoh*, that they ſhall not let their ſins goe. Now therefore lay hold on the golden ſeaſons and opportunities of grace.

5. And laſtly, [p] Chriſt taſted gall for thee, *Mat.* 27. 34. that thou mayſt taſte Ambroſia for him. He taſted death for thee, *Heb.* 2. 9. that thou mighteſt taſte life for him,

[m] *Illic impii miſeriæ ſuæ ſenſu dire torquentur ſolatium aliquod cupiunt non habent.* Calvin. in Luc. 16. 23.

[n] Luke 13. 24.

[o] Hoſ. 6. 4.

5 *Motive.*

[p] Of the paſſion, *Vide Lombard. lib.* 3. *Joannē Decazum*, Biſhop *Biſſon*, *Henry Jacob*, and Mr *Herle.*

him, and drinke of thoſe heavenly Nepenthes, that Ocean of pleaſure, *Pſal.* 16. He ſweat and fainted in his agonies, that he might ſtay thee with flagons, and comfort thee with apples. He faſted fortie dayes, that thou mighteſt be feaſted to eternitie. He wore a crowne of thorns, that thou maiſt weare a crowne of glory. He ſuffered among baſe evill doers, that thou maiſt be bleſſed among thoſe ſweet companions in heaven: In a word, he endured the ſoreſt paines, that thou maiſt enjoy the greateſt pleaſures. O therefore deceive not his expectation, but let him *ſee the travell of his ſoule, and be ſatisfied*, Iſa. 57. 11. 'Tis ſad when Chriſt ſhall complain, as *Iſa.* 49. 4,5, 6 verſes. ¶ O make not his death to be of none effect to you, forbeare to fetch any more ſighs from that heart that is ſo full of love to you, and now at length be perſwaded to give up your ſelves to Chriſt, to taſte and ſee how good the Lord is. ¶ 1 Cor. 1. 17.

The next poynt is, that

There is but a taſte of God here — 3d *Doct.*

Taſting is no more then taſting a little of a thing, 1 *Sam.* 14. 29. not full ſatisfaction. But now to lay you down the *Quod ſit*, and *Cur ſit*, and *Quid inde*. That it is ſo, why it is ſo, and what will follow by way of improvement.

1. For the *Quod ſit*, That this is ſo, I ſhall — 1. *Quod ſit.*

ſhall prove it by Scripture and Arguments drawn out of the Word.

1. By plain Scripture, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2, 3. *As new borne babes deſire the ſincere milke of the Word that yee may grow thereby, if ſo be you have* [h] *taſted that the Lord is gracious*, q. d. If you have taſted a little of God, deſire to ſuck more ſweetneſſe from the promiſes, and labour to grow in grace, ſo that here we live in a taſting, deſiring, and growing condition.

2. By arguments drawn out of the Word, which are two eſpecially.

1. *Arg.* The makings forth of God are not perfect in this Adminiſtration. [i] As a Saints blackeſt night here hath a pillar of fire, ſo his brighteſt day hath a pillar of cloud. The Lord gives out but a little of himſelfe now, in compariſon of what he means to doe hereafter. *Theſe are part of his wayes* (ſaith *Job*) *but how little a portion is heard of him?* Job 26. ult. All that we have and do from him is imperfect. So 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *Wee* [k] *know but in part, and wee propheſie in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away* (at the 9 and 10. verſes.) Then at the 12. verſe. *Now wee ſee through a glaſſe darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I ſhall know him even as alſo I am knowne.* Here we doe but get a taſte of divine ſweetneſſe,

h *Monemur verbo guſtandi nos in hac vitâ illam bonitatẽ Dei experiri tantũ ex parte, guſtus quidem nobis præbetur non plena fruitio.* Hen. Mollerus in Pſal. 34. 6. Pag. 275.

i *Argu.* [i] Exod. 13. 21.

k *Chytraus* ſaid, my greateſt knowledg is to know that I know nothing, and even in the Scriptures, ſaid *Auſtin*, which are my chiefe ſtudy and trade of life. *Multa plura neſcio quam ſcio.* Auguſt. Epiſt. 119. cap. 21.

neſſe, we cannot reach unto the thouſandth part of the joyes of Gods preſence and favour; nay, we come ſo farre ſhort of them, that we cannot conceive them, 1 *Cor.* 2.9. [l] God ſhewes us but his back parts, he keeps the beſt wine till laſt, as Chriſt did at the wedding. The beſt of Chriſt is behinde, as the ſweeteſt hony lies in the bottome. God workes not as naturall Agents, that cannot ſuſpend their power, but work to the utmoſt, as fire in burning, &c. but he lets out himſelfe by degrees, and he workes as pleaſes him.

[l] Exod. 33.23. i. e. *Aliquam gloriæ meæ imperfectam imaginem.* Junius in locum.

We [m] are not capable of much here, we can but taſte: The heart is like a viall glaſſe with a very ſmall neck, and will not fill on a ſudden, though it lye in the Sea where all fulneſſe is. Grace that bubbles into the heart by degrees, as faſt as ſinne goes out, that comes in, *guttatim*, drop by drop. He that thinks he hath no ſinne, deceives himſelfe, and makes God a lyar. There's many reliques of corruption in the beſt heart, which hinder the workings of grace. [n] There's a perpetuall combat between the Fleſh and the Spirit, ſo as one weakens and hinders the other. See *Rom.* 7.23. and *Gal.* 5.17. The workings of our fleſhly principle hinders us from or in well-doing, that either we ſhall neglect it quite, or performe it amiſſe. Beſides this, there are

2. *Arg.*

[m] Of this ſubject *vide* J. Gerhard. locorum theolog. tom. 4. de bonis operibus, ſect. 3. & pag. 59.

[n] *Ad divinæ legis obedientiam fert ſpiritus, caro in contrariam partem retrahit ut homo quodammodo duplex eſt.* Calv.

are innumerable with-drawing inſinuations from the Tempter, and encumbrances from the world, and the cares and buſineſſe of this life; all which doe hinder the reception of much grace, and will ſee wee ſhall but taſte God in this life.

2. *Cur ſit?* 1. Why a taſt?

Thus farre of the *Quod ſit.* Now ſecondly, for the *Cur ſit*, which *Janus*-like hath two faces: For wee muſt ſhew you, why the Lord gives us a taſte, and then, why but a taſte of his goodneſſe in this life.

Firſt, let us examine the Reaſons why the Lord will give his people a taſte of his goodneſſe. Why, ſeeing every one hath his hell, the godly here, and the damned to eternity; yet it is not perfect hell with beleevers here, as it is with reprobates in hell fire.

The Reaſons are foure.

1. *Reaſon.*

1. Becauſe the wicked have not perfect heaven here. True, they are the worlds darlings, they ſwim in pleaſure, and crown themſelves with Roſe-buds, but they feel at ſome times a ſecret griping of °conſcience, the terrors of the law as ſo many flaſhes of hell fire, aſtoniſh them, and they are often laid upon the Rack of an accuſing clamorous conſcience, which is a taſte of infernall torments; and therefore 'tis but equall the Saints now in their hell, ſhould

° *Nihil eſt miſerius quam animus hominis conſcius.* Plaut.

ſhould have ſome taſtes of God, and the powers of the world to come.

2. God knowes not how to conceale his love from them in this life, as *Joſeph* had much adoe to keep a grave countenance, and conceale himſelfe from his brethren, *Geneſ.* 42. 7. 24. and 45. 1. v. to 15. v. His love at the length brake out into teares and kiſſes. So it is here; God knowes not how to conceale his love from the elect, but it muſt break forth in this life. He is the God of peace, and delights to ſpeak peace to beleevers. [p] His thoughts of grace and favour, ſpring meerly from the ſweet and unſpeakable excellency of his nature, which makes him ever hammering and contriving good for his people, as you ſee *Jerem.* 29. 11. If God takes a great deale of pleaſure in thinking, then much more in acting for us. See *Deuter.* 30. 9. *Micb.* 7. 18.

2. *Reaſon.*

[p] Dr. *Homes* on Iſai. 55. 9. pag. 12.

3. To ſtay us with his love, and taſtes of his goodneſſe, and ſo keep us from deſpaire. If there were nothing of God to be taſted here, wee ſhould quickly tire and faint, retire and fall in our journey to heaven. The Lord ſees that we have need of refreſhment, and ſtrength, and comfort from him; [q] *He remembers that wee are but duſt, he* [r] *knowes our frame, our labour, our patience, our tentations,* and he would not

3 *Reaſon.*

[q] Pſa. 103. 14.

[r] Rev. 2. 2. 19.

have us pine and ſink, and give up heaven for loſt, and therefore he gives us taſtes of his goodneſſe to [f] encourage us, and keep us from ſin; & the taſte we have here of God, will doe it: For it is the earneſt of the Spirit, and our ſealing up unto the day of redemption; and Faith is the evidence of things not ſeene; and the leaſt glimpſe of Chriſt, and Heaven, will doe much, *Heb.* 11.26.

[f] Pſa. 125.3,5

4. And laſtly, to make us lights in the world, to honour him, allure others to taſt with us, or ſtop their mouthes and [t] condemne them for not taſting, when pleading impoſſibility, God will ſhew them men and women of their time, eſtates, parts and callings, that were religious, and *ſhined forth in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation.* See *Matth.* 12.41.42. We read that *the Saints ſhall judge the world,* 1 Cor. 6. 2. and *Matth.* 19. 28. This I conceive will be done two wayes.

4 *Reaſ.*

[t] *Hoc non aliter intelligendum quàm quod fides Apoſtolorum Iſraelitis ſit adempturа omnem excuſationem. Alioqui Chriſtus ſolus in judicio ſedebit judex.* Muſculus in Mat. 19.28.

1. By their conſent unto and applauſe of Chriſts judgement, ſaying, *Hallelujah, Honour and power be to the Lord, for true and righteous are his judgements.* Rev. 19.1,2.

2. By their [u] holy lives and good examples, as *Ambroſe* ſpeakes; Their zeale ſhall judge the worlds coldneſſe, their piety the worlds prophaneſſe, their prizing and embracing Chriſt, the worlds rejection and ſhame-

[u] *Erunt tanquàm aſſeſſores, & judicabunt mundum pietate, fide, & integritate,* Calv. in 1 Cor. 6. 2.

ſhamefull neglect of Chriſt. In a word, their taſting Divine ſweetneſſe, the worlds diſreliſhing the waves of holineſſe.

Thus you ſee why the Saints have here a taſte of Gods goodneſſe: Next we muſt ſhew you why they have no more then a taſte here? Seeing we might think ſure it would be better for us, and God would have more glory, if we were wholly purged from ſin, and grace were perfected in us in this world, &c. 2ly, Why but a taſte?

The Reaſons why God, notwithſtanding, gives us but a taſte of himſelfe, and his grace and goodneſſe, are foure.

1. To manifeſt his power and wiſdome in our preſervation and perſeverance in the ſtrength of that taſting: He makes us live and thrive with a ſmall taſte of his goodneſſe, and keeps a little ſpark of grace alive in the midſt of the rowling waves of corruption. 1. *Reaſ.*

[w] Hereby the mighty power of God is diſplayed: You are *ſtrengthened with all might* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *according to his glorious power.* 'Tis glorious power indeed, that can keep grace alive in ſuch naughty hearts as we beare about us. w *Vide Lockyer* his uſefull inſtructions on Col. 1. 11.

Moreover, the Wiſdome of God is ſeen, by turning poyſon into food: For their very falls and failings [x] better them, and *all things work for their good.* And hereby the x Rom. 8. 28.

Devill is the more confounded, when he ſees, that for a taſte of Gods goodneſſe, we diſreliſh glutting our ſelves with his follies, and the pleaſures of ſinne. A Father ſaith well, The teares of true penitents doe more ſcortch the Devils, then all the flames of hell: For hereby all their hopes are blaſted, and the great underminer countermined and blown up.

2. *Reaſ.*

2. That we might not be puffed up, and to keep us vigilant and humble, and in continuall dependance upon him, that wee may ſeek for ſupplies from heaven to recrute our graces, and ſtrengthen the things that are ready to dye, that ſo that which is [y] lacking in our Faith and other Graces, may be filled up. *Be not high minded, but feare. God reſiſts the proud, but gives* more *grace to the humble.* The ſurvey of our imperfections ſhould make us humble, as the Peacock looking on his black feet, lets fall his plumes: and then humility gets larger and further taſtes of God; as the ſilver deawes flow from the mountaines to the loweſt vallies: The [z] high and lofty one will dwell in a broken heart.

y 1 Theſſ. 3. 10 Rom. 11. 20.

z *Deus non infundit oleum miſericordiæ, niſi in vas contritum.* Bern.

3. *Reaſ.*

3. To weane us from the world, and mind us, this is not our home, and make us long for our diſſolution. If the Saints ſhould have a fulneſſe of grace, and outward things in this life, they would cry,

Bonum

Bonum eſt eſſe hic, It [a] *is good for us to be here. Come, let us build Tabernacles, &c.* Now therefore God would give us but a bait, but a taſte here in our pilgrimage, that our hearts may not bee glewed to the world, and take up our reſt here, but that we may long for clearer [b] viſions, and fuller enjoyments of God, when we ſhall *be filled with all the fulneſſe of God. ſcil.* with Chriſts diffuſive fulneſſe, & the influences of his grace, and the rayes of his glory. Oh this makes a Saint ſay with *David*, *My ſoule breakes for the longing it hath after thee*; with the Spouſe, *Make haſte my beloved,* [c] *as the ſwift Roe on the mountaines of Spices*; with *Paul*, *I deſire to be* [d] *diſſolved, and be with Chriſt*; and with *John*, *O come Lord Jeſu, come quickly.* When the childe hath taſted of the breaſt, it thirſts with moſt greedineſſe to be filled; and when the ſoule hath got a taſte, a glympſe of God, it longs to be ſatisfied, to ſmell to every flower in Chriſts boſome, to view God face to face, when ſorrow ſhall take wings and flye away, when corruption and temptation ſhall bee no more, but Grace ſhall be ſwallowed up of Glory, and you ſhal *ſhine as the Sun in the Firmament.*

Truly, my brethren, the manner of Gods diſpenſation here, which you ſee is but in taſtes of his goodneſſe, muſt needs raiſe up

[a] Mat. 17. 14.

[b] *Ibi non guſtabũt quã ſuavis eſt Dominus, ſed implebuntur & ſatiabuntur dulcedine mirifica,* Cyprian. Serm de Chriſti aſcenſ.

[c] Cant. 8. 14.

[d] Heathens that knew not Chriſt, have had ſtrong grounds of comfort againſt the fear of death. *Tull. in Tuſc. & Seneca paſſim in Epiſtolis. Conradus Vorſtius. Com. in Phil.* 1. 23. *Vide introductionem Lypſii in Stoicam Philoſophiam.*

in beleevers, continuall breathings, and thirſtings, and inflamed deſires, after God.

Alexander the Great ſailing in a boyſterous Sea, diſcovered before the reſt of his companions, the happy land of *Arabia*, by the ſmell of thoſe ſweet odors which the winde conveyed to him; whereupon himſelfe and his fellow-ſouldiers took encouragement, and knew they had not farre to goe. What is grace but a ſmell of heaven before-hand, to encourage poor ſinners ſailing in this *Ægean* Sea to glory? how ſhould this make us long to land there, and kiſſe the ground of our native Countrey, which is heaven?

And then,

4 *Reaſ.* 4. And laſtly, this will ſweeten heaven to thoſe that taſte here. A haven is moſt welcome after a ſtorme, a palace is moſt glorious to him that comes out of a dungeon, a feaſt to the hungry is moſt welcome, and robes to the naked; our fears, our ſweat, [c] our combat here, will exceedingly ſweeten and as foyles let of our reſt, our joy, our crowne there. Who (think you) will moſt admire heaven, the Angels that have been there from the beginning, or forlorn captives and poore pilgrimes, that come in a manner out of hell into heaven? Chriſt and heaven ſhall be *admired in all them that* [f] *beleeve, &c.* For

[c] *Afflictiones ſunt tanquam grata condimenta quibus deſideria noſtra incenduntur, & promiſſiones divinæ reddantur dulciores.* Baſil.

[f] 2 Theſſ. 1. 10.

For theſe Reaſons we may gueſſe (poſitively we know not) why God will give us but a taſte of his goodneſſe here: [g] Indeed *his wayes are paſt finding out*; theſe are but conjectures. Well, the Reaſons of theſe things ſhall bee fully cleared up to you in the clouds, when all the workings of God which you ſee now peece-meale, ſhall bee laid in a frame together, and you ſhall all be forc'd to fall down and cry, [h] Holy, Holy, Holy: Thou art juſt and righteous in all thy dealings with the children of men. Great is thy wiſdom, and thou doeſt what thou pleaſeſt, and when.

[g] Rom. 11. 33.

[h] Rev. 4. 8. 11.

I come now to the improvement of the poynt.

3[ly] *Quid inde?*

And firſt, this meets with the wild fancies of ſome that dream of a fulneſſe and perfection here, and ſtick not to call themſelves *Perfectioniſts*, whereas you ſee we do but taſte God here, and to be kindly ſenſible of our imperfections, is the higheſt pitch of perfection attainable in this life, as *Hierome* [i] ſpeaks.

[i] *Hæc hominibus ſola perfectio eſt imperfectos ſe eſſe noverint.* Hieron. lib. 1. adverſus Pelag.

But let us heare their Arguments.

1. *Ob.*

Firſt, how often ſay they, is it ſaid, beleevers are filled in this life? *Open your mouthes wide* (ſaith God) *and I will fill them with good things.* See *Luke* 1. 53. *Romans* 15. 13. *Epheſians* 5. 18. Now is taſting a little of God, and being fille-

with his goodneſſe, all one? I anſwer.

Sol. 1. Firſt, the Saints are ſaid to be filled in this life, becauſe they receive according to their preſent capacity (you may ſuppoſe a glaſſe to be ſo ſmall that a drop will fill it) *we are ſtraitned in our bowels*, 2 Cor. 6. 12. and are of ſlender and ſhallow capacities in the things of heaven, and ſo a ſmall drop of grace fills us, and yet 'tis but a taſte, for our hearts are widened and enlarged to take in much more above.

2. 2. We may be ſaid to be filled, becauſe every faculty hath divine infuſions by that taſte. See 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 23.

3. 3. The ſoul hath more reall ſatisfaction by that taſte, then all the worlds abundance. When the belly is filled with the hidden treaſure of the earth, the heart may ſtill be void of contentment, *Eccleſiaſt.* 1. 2. But the leaſt taſte of GOD fills and refreſhes, and delights the Soule. *Pſalm* 116 7.

2 *Ob.* 2. *Ob.* You read often of the Saints perfection here, as *Geneſ.* 17. 1. *Walk before me and bee perfect.* So *Matth.* 5. 48. *Philip.* 3. 15.

Sol. There is a perfection in ſubſtance, or parts, and there is a perfection in meaſure or degrees. The firſt Saints attaine in this life, they have ſincerity and grace in all parts and faculties (as you heard) and they have

have *respect unto all Gods commands*, as *David* and *Paul* (see *Luke* 1.6.)[k] they are deeply sensible of their imperfections, & mourn for their failings, they have the foundation and seeds of perfection, but for perfection in measure or degrees, that is in heaven.

[k] *Ex quo factum est, virtutem quæ nunc est in homine justo, perfectam hactenus nominari, ut ad ejus perfectionem pertineat, etiam ipsius imperfectionis & in veritate cognitio, & in humilitate confessio.* Aug. lib. 3. contra duas Epistolas Pelag cap. 7.

3. *Ob.* But he that is born of God sinneth not. 1 *John* 3.9. therefore what should hinder perfection of grace within? True,

3 *Ob.*

Such an one sinneth not willingly, customarily, impenitently: Sinne is a burthen to him, and he makes not a trade of sinne. But if men will say they have no sinne, conscience will accuse them, and experience will judge them for making God a lyar, who saith, *In many things we sin all.*[l] Where is that man, or how is he named, that can say he finds no rebellion nor distemper in his affections, nor disorder in any motion of the soule, all within is sweetly tuned to obedience, without jarre or discord from corruption? &c. Certainly *Pauls* confession will make such ashamed,[m] *when I would doe well, evill is present with me. O who shall deliver me from this body of death!*

Sol.

[l] *William Pemble* of Justification, sect. 3. cap. 1. pag. 181.

[m] Rom. 7. 21. and 24.

4. *Ob.* All the workes of God are perfect, *Deut.* 32. 4. But grace is the work of God,

4 *Ob.*

God, *Phil.* 2. 13. *Ergo* grace is perfect.

Sol. Works that are meerely works of God which he works by himſelfe, are all perfect, but grace though it be a work of God is wrought in and by us. Grace hath its beginning in the minde and will of man, and hence it is defiled, as water pure in the fountain is defiled when it paſſes through a muddy channell.

[n] *Nolite cogitare invitum trahi, trahitur animus & amore.* Auguſt. tract. 26. in Johan.

[o] *Inclinãdo voluntatem, non intrudendo poteſtatem.*

Now that beleevers are [n] coworkers with God after the firſt act of converſion (wherein I confeſſe they are meerly paſſive) to me is evident from that place, *Cant.* 1. 4. *Draw me and we will run after thee.* 'Tis not draw me and we will be [o] dragged after thee, but *we will run after thee.* So *Acts* 26. 19. *Paul* ſaith when the Lord had once toucht his heart, *he was not diſobedient to the heavenly viſion:* So that *Acti agimus*, [p] God melts our wills and makes us active in the working out of our own ſalvation *with feare and trembling.* Libertines teach otherwiſe, *viz.* that the holy Ghoſt dwells in the Saints in proper perſon, and there doth formally beleeve, pray, love, repent, we being alwayes meere patients in minde, will, affections and memory, &c. But we ſay he dwels in us by ſpirituall gifts and graces, created in us to act with the vitall influence of our underſtanding, will, and affections, for we are not meere blocks after converſion, but *are*

Acti agimus.

[p] Though his effectuall working is irreſiſtible, yet 'tis done *leni ſpiritu non dura manu*, rather by ſweet influence then extream violence.

[q] *alive*

q *alive unto God in Christ.* Wee are not the meere shops of the Spirit in which hee works, for this would make our failings the Spirits, 'twould nourish all lazinesse, and securisy in us; and, in a word, include this blasphemy that wee are Christed and Godded with Christ; But on the other side Gods working in, with, and by us, layes the true ground and guilt of all our graces, imperfections and defilements, at our own doores.

q Eph. 2. 1.

Lastly, They object yet farther and say, Christ bids us pray that Gods *will may be done on earth as in heaven,* and he did not teach us to pray for impossibilities. *Ergo.*

5 *Object.*

I answer, We r pray not that we may be equall to the Saints and Angels above, but that wee may write after so faire a copie, imitate them more and more, still striving to be and doe like them, though the most wee can reach unto is to make some broken and imperfect eccho's to those Hallelujahs.

Sol.

r *Sufficit hoc voto testari nobis odio ac tristitiæ esse quicquid Deî voluntati adversum cernimus, extinctumq; cupere, &c.* Calv. in Mat. 6. 10.

So then when we pray we may do Gods will on earth as 'tis in heaven, the meaning is that we may strive to doe their worke in their manner, and that wee may come as neere them as we can s; It argues not equalitie or perfection of grace here.

s *In arduis voluisse sat est.*

2. Is it so that beleevers can get but a taste of God and his goodnesse here, and that the full

2 *Use.*

full meales be above, then let us learn [t] how to judge of Chriſtians, not by what they are and receive, but ſhortly ſhall be and have. Indeed at preſent they are in a low condition, loaded with many burthens, ſlighted and deſpiſed in the world, ſo that if beleevers had their portion here, *they would* ſeem to *be of all men moſt miſerable* [u], 1 Cor. 15. 19. But remember worldlings *our life is hid with Chriſt in God* [w], and *it doth not yet appeare what we ſhall be* [x], 1 Joh. 3. 2. We have ſomewhat in poſſeſſion, but more in reverſion. We are yet in our minority, in our pilgrimage, in our travelling cloths (as it were) but the whole world ſhall ſtand amazed at the light of a glorified Saint, ſhining with divine luſtre, and enriched with a royall diadem, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. Then *Chriſt ſhall be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that beleeve. ſcil.* When the world ſhall ſee beleevers that here are deſpiſed and *accounted the off-ſcourings of all things*, then ſhining forth as ſtarres, *Dan.* 12. 3. nay, *as the Sun*, *Mat.* 13. 43. nay, as Chriſt himſelfe, their bodies being new moulded & *faſhioned like unto his glorious body*: Then ſhall all the wicked of the world ſee their folly and madneſſe in deſpiſing ſuch, and gnaw their tongues for anguiſh, envy, and vexation of heart. Hearken profane ones, 'twill be your wiſdome to admire them now, and ſo look into

[t] Col. 3. 3, 4. *Tantũ abeſt ut nunc appareat carnis oculis, ut contrà nihil ſit Chriſtianè viventibus calamitoſius.* Beza.

[u] Apoc. 3. 17. 2 Tim. 3. 12. Pſal. 44. 23. Rom. 8. 36.

[w] As the pearl is hid till the ſhell is brokẽ.

[x] *Ac ſi diceret quamvis mundus noncognoſcat vos, tamen in hac carne, in hoc mortali corpore filii Dei ſumus per fidẽ, nec moramur mundi judicia, nec propterea promiſſio Dei & fides evertitur. Non fallimus etiam ſi ſimus expoſiti omnibus ferè mundi & Satanæ jaculis; longè certiora ſunt quæ Deus promittit quã ea quæ noſtrâ ratione aut ſẽ-*

into their wayes, and be like unto them, for all your wondring and admiration then ſhall doe you no good, as is evident from *Mat.* 25. 8, 9, 11, 12. For you ſhall be hurried from the Lord, and the glory of his power, and never ſee God nor Saint more; *conſider this you that forget God*, and ſlight the godly, leaſt, &c.

ſu metiri vel comprehendere poſſumus. Tho. Naogeorgus in 1 Johan. 3. 2.

Next, here's comfort for weak Chriſtians, that are [y] ever mourning and complaining, and ſo exceedingly diſcouraged and dif-heartened at the ſight of their many faylings and infirmities, and ready to ſit down in deſpair and give up all for loſt. Hearken dejected ſoules, open your ſluces, and let in refreſhing ſtreames of conſolation.

3 *Uſe.*

[y] *Vide* Doctor *Sibbs* broken reed & ſmoking flax; and that excellent piece of *Joſ. Symonds*, The caſe and cure of deſerted ſoules.

Know and conſider in the firſt place. We can get but a taſte of God in this life, there is no perfection under the Sun. Will you be angry at his wayes of diſpenſation? are you wiſer then God? And may not he doe as he pleaſeth? Oh therefore [z] *waite, wait I ſay on the Lord*, live more upon Chriſt and leſſe upon your own actings and incomes, which are not onely ſmall, but uncertain in this life, ebbing and flowing with the Sea; But Chriſt hath a [a] dwelling fullneſſe in him, and his fullneſſe is yours.

1.

[z] Pſal. 27. 14.

[a] Coloſ. 1. 19.

Again, you have no reaſon to be diſcouraged at ſmall beginnings; True grace is very

2.

very little at firſt, *like a ſmall* [b] *muſtard ſeed.* Look on your ſelves as *elected to be blameleſſe and without ſpot*; *Who is he that deſpiſeth the day of ſmall things?* Zech. 4. 10. Chriſt would not have us deſpiſe little things: A bonfire was but a ſparke at firſt, the huge oak an akorn; the glorious Angels diſdain not attendance on little ones, little in their own eyes, & little in the eyes of the world: 'Tis Chriſt that raiſeth the worth of little and meane places and perſons; *Bethleem* the leaſt, and yet not the leaſt, the leaſt in it ſelfe, but not the leaſt in reſpect Chriſt was borne there; Jeſus Chriſt is formed in thy heart. The ſecond Temple came ſhort of the outward magnificence of the former, yet 'tis ſaid to be more glorious then the firſt, becauſe Chriſt came into it [c], and thou alſo art *the Temple of the holy Ghoſt.* The pupill of the eye is very little, yet ſeeth a great part of the heaven at once, though faith be no bigger then a muſtard ſeed, yet 'tis all eye to behold Chriſt. [d] Pearls & Diamonds, though little, are of much eſteem, but nothing under heaven is of that worth and uſe as a little grace; Oh therefore let not your ſpirits droop in deſpondency, though as yet you have got but a ſmall taſte of God. Once more,

As you doe but taſte the graces and conſolations of God here, ſo nor afflictions and the

[b] *Regnum Dei grano ſinapis confertur, & Dominus conſulè regnū ſuum a tenuibus & contemptis principiis auſpicatur, ut inſperati progreſſus ejus potentiam multis illuſtrent.* Martinus Bucerus in Mat. 13. 31.

[c] 2 Cor. 6 16.

[d] *Fides licèt exigua et infirma accipit tamen quæ largitur Deus, haud ſecus ac puerulus parvulâ, vel ſcabioſa mendicus manu, ille panem, hic ſtipe porrectam accipit perindè ac ſi major aut ſanior eſſet.* Spin. de juſtitia Chriſti. 3. 7.

the bitter fruits of ſin. 'Tis ſaid of beleevers, that [e] God *in a little wrath hides his face from them for a moment, God is not alwayes chiding*, your good houres are many to your bad; you doe but taſte of afflictions and [f] deſertions, nay beleevers doe but taſte of death it ſelfe, *Mat.* 16. 28. which is never ſpoken of the wicked, but onely the elect. They doe but taſte death, but ſip at this bitter cup: Paſſing the firſt death is but a taſte of death, nay 'tis a ſilver bridge to glory, and ſaith *Cyprian*, the midwife of immortality [g]. But they drink deep of that diſmall cup, that carouſe in it to eternity by partaking of the ſecond death.

[e] Iſa. 54. 8.

[f] *Amaritudinē radicis dulcedo pomi cōpenſat. Iſa. &c.*

Cyprian.

[g] *Mors æterna vera mors eſt, hanc non videbunt.* Martin. Bucerus in Johan. 8. 51.

Lay theſe things together, you can but taſte God here, the leaſt taſte is not to be deſpiſed, and you ſhall but taſte of the bitter fruits of ſin. O therefore complain not, mourn not as men and women without hope, *Rejoyce in the Lord, and again I ſay rejoyce.*

Suffer then the word of Exhortation, tis to two duties. 4. *Uſe.*

1. Labour for more of God in this life, reſt not in this that you have grace in truth, neither thinke it enough that you have taſted divine goodneſſe, let not this make you ſloathfull and ſecure, that there is no perfection here; for as there are degrees, and ſome taſte more then [h] others, 1.

[h] others, ſo this is a ſure ſigne thou haſt no grace, that thinkeſt thou haſt enough, and if thou ceaſe to be better thou begin'ſt to decline; for 'tis the nature of true grace, like a ſpark to aſpire towards its proper element, a Saint never leaves climing till he get above the clouds. See *Phil.* 3. 12, 13. [i] *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect* (now mark what he inferreth) *but I follow after if I may apprehend that for which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus: Brethren, I count not my ſelfe to have apprehended, but this one thing I doe, forgetting thoſe things which are behinde, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before, I preſſe forward to the mark.* See the Apoſtle ſaith not, let us be careleſſe and lazie, for we get but a ſmall taſte of God, wee cannot be perfect Saints, let us not therefore be righteous overmuch, and ſo more preciſe then wiſe, but eat, drinke, and be merry, &c. He doth not argue thus; But the Saints have here but a little grace; therefore let us be vigilant, let us up and be doing, and get as much as we * can, for ſurely ſome have leſſe then others, more may be had, & the moſt we can get will be but enough, ſtrive therefore to excell in grace, to get farther taſts of God, that ſo you may be exemplary and ſit high in glory. Growth honours God much, *Joh.* 15. 8. It makes us ſtand faſt in trialls,

[h] *Qui melior eſſe non cupit, nec eſt bonus, ubi incipis nolle fieri melior ibi deſinis eſſe bonus.* Bernard. in Epiſt. 91. *Idcò deteriores ſumus quia meliores eſſe debemus.* Salvian. de Provid. lib. 4.

[i] *Ingredi ſine macula dicitur non qui jam perfectus eſt ſed qui ad ipſam perfectionē irreprehenſibiliter currit: Ingreſſū quippe hoc iter noſtrum quo tendimus ad perfectionē.* Aug. lib. de perfec. juſtitiæ.

* *Finis appetitio non habet limites definitos.* Ariſt. Pol. 1. 6.

trialls, and endure the ſhock of a tentation, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. 10. *Mat.* 14. 31. It gives us the comfort of our graces in life and death, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. and fits us for greater meaſures of glory. There are degrees [k], 1 *Cor.* 15. 41. and *Mat.* 10. 41, 42. And ſurely the more grace here, the more glory there, the better man hath undoubtedly the bigger manſion. And we may ſafely eye this in duty, *Heb.* 11. 26. Many Chriſtians have been eminent in grace, we are encompaſſed with a cloud of witneſſes, let's *be followers of them who through faith and patience inherited the promiſes.* Either quit the name of Chriſtians, or quit your ſelves like Chriſtians; the body muſt grow up to Chriſt in all things, that we may be conformable to our head, *Eph.* 4. 15, 16. *Luke* 2. 52. Our head hath received all fullneſſe to this end, *Eph.* 1. *ult.* *Joh.* 10. 10. Nay our growth makes up his fullneſſe, even the fullneſſe of Chriſt myſticall, though Chriſt perſonall be full without us, *Eph.* 4. 13.[l] The pitch of every Chriſtians growth is called *the ſtature of the fullneſſe of Chriſt.*

[k] *Non modo inter cœleſtia & terreſtria diſcrimen eſt, ſed ne cœleſtibus quidẽ omnibus æqualis eſt gloria.* Calvin.

[l] *Vid.* Mr Tho. Goodwin of growth. *Nonnulli hoc ad quantitatem & ætatem corporum reſurgentium in noviſſimo die retulerint, at apertis verbis loquitur Apoſtolus de doctrinâ quâ creſcimus ad perfectionem cognitionis Chriſti, ſivè quâ creſcimus plenè in Chriſtum, ut agnoſcamus ſolum Chriſtum noſtram eſſe ſalutem.* Philip. Melanchthon. in Eph. 4. 13.

There is *Plenitudo Partium & Gradum.*

1. A fullneſſe of parts, when no member is lacking, *Job.* 6. 39.

2. Of degrees, when no meaſure of growth is wanting in every part; Every member muſt grow according to its fit proportion. O therefore be not contented with a ſmall taſte of God, when larger taſts and portions of grace are to be had here, eſpecially in theſe times of larger Goſpel diſcoveries, and all plenty of meanes, *Luke* 12. 48. Finally, conſider how you are affected in inferiour things, how men reſolve to be rich, and ſo fall into many ſnares, and tentations. Will a competency, a taſte of outward things content you, that yet periſh in the uſing? We never think our grounds, orchards, and gardens fruitfull enough: When wee come to a feaſt, wee thinke it not enough that we taſte of any dainties, unleſſe we are ſatisfied; it ſhould be thus in ſpiritualls; Wicked men never think they have enough of ſin: 'Tis their character to grow [m] worſe and worſe, they drink deep of the cup of pleaſure, they heap ſin upon ſin, till their iniquities reach up to heaven; They draw the threds ſo big, ſo long, till they make cords of vanity, and then wreath and twiſt thoſe cords, till they become [n] cartropes of iniquity; why ſo beleevers likewiſe muſt aym at a perfection, and

[m] 2 Tim. 3. 13.

[n] Iſa. 5. 18.

and goe on from [o] vertue to vertue, from glory to glory; As the light *that increaseth to the perfect day*, Prov. 4. 18.

2. Is it so that the Saints have but a taste here in comparison of what they shall have hereafter, Oh then let beleevers be perswaded to be even weary & sick of this world, and say, Woe is us that we must live in the tents of *Mesech. Our soules break with longing after God.* O you children of promise, and heires of heaven, why desire some of you to [p] live so long upon [q] earth, where you must drinke down continually the bitter potions of care and sorrow, and can get but now and then a taste of divine sweetnesse and joy? Why love ye not the appearance of Christ? Why long you not to enjoy and swim in those rivers of pleasure, where you may have your fill and will of God? You may guesse at the joyes of heaven by those tasts of God and ravishings of spirit you have sometimes on earth; Speak you joynt-heires with Christ, have you not sometimes in prayer & meditation, when your hearts are enlarged & your soules upon the wing, holy extasies and transportations of spirit, in so much that whether you are *in the body or out of the body* you cannot well tell? Call in your sweet experiences and see if they will not witnesse to this truth, and have you not esteemed such a moment a-

[o] 2 Cor. 3. 18.

2. [o]

[p] *Quid est diu vivere nisi diu torqueri.* Aug. de temp. 113.

[q] *Et mundus carcer est, et corpus carcer est.* Aug. in Psal. 141.

Mors est quæ efficit ut nasci non sit supplicium. Seneca ad Marc. cap. 20.

Primum boni non nasci secundum citius mori. Ita Silenus apud Lact. Lactant. in Instit. li. 3. c. 18.

bove all the world, what would you give to have more of them, and to have them more laſting? Why now, my Brethren, if there be ſuch unſpeakable joy at taſting the ſweetneſſe of God for a little moment, how unconceivable will that happineſſe be when you ſhall be filled with thoſe joyes for evermore? If our viaticum be ſo good, how great is that [r] weight of glory which God hath prepared for them that feare him? The Lord give you heaved hearts & winged affections in the conſideration of theſe things. Amen.

[r] 2 Cor. 4. 17. The ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifieth glory and weight. Glory ſuch a weight that if we were not upheld by the power of God, we could never beare it. Joy ſo big, that it cannot enter into us, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. but wee muſt enter into it. *Matth.* 25. 21. *John Trapp.* Com.

4 *Doct.*

4. *Doct.* They onely that taſte can ſee how good the Lord is. They onely that taſte communion with God, and have enjoyments of God in a holy life, are able rightly to ſee and diſcover and know his goodneſſe. *A good underſtanding have all they that doe his commandements*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 111. 10. When God turnes men [s] *from darkneſſe to light*, hee turnes them likewiſe *from the power of Satan unto God.*

[s] Acts 26. 18.

A man may ſeem to know much, and yet know nothing aright, no not the leaſt or eaſieſt principle of Religion, till this be done.

done. 1 *Corinth.* 12. 3. *No man can ſee nor ſay, that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt.*

They know nothing yet as they ought to know, and, *as the truth is in Jeſus,* till they have the Spirit, and by him have taſted how good the Lord is, till they have warm affections in heavenly things, and the bent and purpoſe of their hearts is to pleaſe God, and work by rule. [t] Eph. 4. 21.

Let me lay down the grounds or arguments which will open and illuſtrate the truth.

1. True knowledge is not bare ſpeculation, 'tis heart-work as well as brain-work. See 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſſe, hath ſhined in our hearts, to* [u] *give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* Where you ſee, 1 *Arg.* 2 Cor. 4. 6. opened.

1. That Jehovah is a very glorious Being, he is clothed with light as with a garment.

2. We are not able with [w] comfort to behold this glory, but in the ſmiling face of Chriſt: God out of Chriſt a conſuming fire.

3. Till God ſhine, we are not able to ſee him in Chriſt: the Goſpel is a ſealed book till he unclaſp it by his Spirit.

4. Illumination of a darke ſoule is as

[u] *Duplicem illuminationem ponit, unam Evangelii, alteram arcanam quæ ſit in cordibus.* Calv.

[w] *Non niſi in Chriſti facie cognoſcitur Deus qui viva eſt atque expreſſa ejus imago.* Col. 1. 15. *Idem.*

great a wonder as the creation and illumination of the world. But then

5. And laſtly, that which I quote the Text for, is this, That when God ſhines in upon men, he doth not onely ſhine into their heads to illuminate them, but into their hearts to affect and transform, and new [x] mould them. 'Tis ſaid, *John* 17. 3 *This is life eternall to know Thee and Chriſt whom Thou haſt ſent.* Goſpel knowledge therefore is more then a Metaphyſicall ſpeculation and ſticking in the notion; for thouſands with ſuch kinde of knowledge periſh: ſaving knowledge is a very glorious and comprehenſive grace.

[x] *Renovamur in imaginem Dei per cognitionem.* Col. 3. 10. *Idem.*

2. *Arg.*

Again, God is at once a Fountaine of Light and Life as the [y] Sunne (to which he is compared, *Mal.* 4. 2.) that doth not onely enlighten but enliven and quicken us, *Pſal.* 36. 8. 9. *They ſhall be ſatisfied with the fatneſſe of thy Houſe—— With thee is the Fountaine of life, in thy light ſhall we ſee light.* You ſee light and life come together. Now where there is life, there are all the ſpiritual ſenſes, and the ſweetneſſe, that is the ſenſe of Gods goodneſſe will delight them all.

[y] *Semper in Sole ſita eſt Rhodos, qui & calorem & colorem nobis impertit. Aeneas Sylv.* [y] *Talpis auſcultationis gloria damnatur oculis.* And uſually, ſay the the Naturaliſts they that are excellent in one ſenſe are, deficient in a-

1. There's ſmelling of his rich perfumes, as *Pſa.* 45. 8. *All thy garments ſmell of Myrrhe, Aloes and Caſſia.*

2. Touching the hem of Chriſts garment by faith, and kiſſing the ſweet lips of Chriſt, *Cant.* 1. 2. 3.

3. Hearing the pleasant voyce of Christ, with which the soule is so taken, that for joy it can speak but broken words, *Cant.* 2. 8. ——*The voyce of my beloved!*

4. Tasting the Graces and Comforts of Christ, *Cant.* 2. 3. *He is as the Apple tree among the trees of the wood, I sate under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

5. There's seeing Christ; [a] *His countenance is comely*, saith the Spouse, *He is the fairest of ten thousand, his cheeks as beds of spices, and his lips like Lillies.* See Ephes. 1. 18.

To behold God in Christ, is a delightfull thing, a transforming sight, 2 *Corinth.* 3. 18.

Thus you see that God at the same time is a Fountain of Light and Life, and that where there is spirituall life, there are all the spirituall senses in the greatest vigor; therefore they onely that can taste, can see and discover how good the Lord is.

Next, Illumination is a fruit of Christs ascension and intercession; for at his ascension he gave gifts unto men, and Christ prayes the Father to *sanctifie us through his truth*, *Joh.* 17. 17. [b] Therefore till we are sanctified by holy truths, and cast into their moulds, till wee have tastes of God goodnesse, we shall not see divine truths b

nother. But in spirituals, he that hath life, hath all the senses in vigor.

[a] Cant. 5. 10. & 16.

3. *Arg.*

[b] *Vide* Aug. Marlorat. in locum.

the light of the Spirit, and by vertue of Chriſts interceſſion: for you ſee the truths which are of Chriſts purchaſing of his Father, to be unvail'd unto us, they are renewing, inflaming, and ſanctifying truths.

4. *Arg.* [c] *Chriſtus ex inimicis fecit amicos quibus omnia patris myſteria arcanaque aperit atque exponit, ut nihil ignorent earum rerum quas filios neſſe oportet.* Bullingerus in Joh. 15. 15.

Again Chriſt (as a Prophet) teacheth onely his friends, [c] *John* 15.15. *I have called you friends*, ſaith Chriſt, *for all that I have heard of the Father, I have made knowne unto you*, Chriſt doth freely unboſome himſelfe to his friends, but he ſpake in parables to his Diſciples, *leſt others ſhould ſee with their eyes, heare with their eares, and ſhould be enamoured with thoſe myſteries, and Chriſt ſhould heale them.* A ſad place, *Mark* 4, 11. 12. *No man can ſee and know the Father, but the Sonne, and he to whom the Sonne will reveale him*, but the Sonne reveales him to none but his friends; every one is not let in to ſee this ſight, but the dore is ſhut againſt them. Now who are the friends of Chriſt, but ſuch as feaſt with him, *Cant.* 5. 1. ſuch as have boſome communion with Chriſt, and ſweet embraces from him? They that having taſted Divine ſweetneſſe ſtrike an eternall league with God? Now ſuch onely ſhall be taught of Heaven?

Arg. 5. And ſo thoſe that have a filiall feare of God, are numbred among his Diſciples, *Pſal.* 25.12. *What man is he that feareth the Lord*

Lord? Him ſhall be teach in the way that he ſhall chuſe. And at the 14. verſe, *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that feare him.* He unlockes his Cabinet to ſuch, and to theſe he ſhewes his rich jewels of truth. [d] Now the originall of filiall feare is the taſte of his goodneſſe and ſenſe of his love, when the ſoule being tempted to grieve him, ſaith, He is ſo great I dare not diſpleaſe him, and ſo good I feare to forfeit him, how can I doe this wickedneſſe, and ſin againſt my God, a God in covenant with me? Get you hence, *What have I to doe any more with Idols?* A man feare not to hazard the loſſe of that in which he never taſted any ſweetneſſe or goodneſſe.

[d] Juſtice may have the knee of feare, but onely mercy her heart.

Once more,

The promiſe of knowledge is made to ſuch as obey God, *John* 7.17. [c] *If any man will doe his will, he ſhall know his doctrine.* Now they onely doe the will of God that have taſted his goodneſſe. Others may obey the lawes of men, or a clamorous conſcience, not Gods will becauſe it is his will, &c.

6 Arg.

[c] *Et nos componamus ad obſequendum Deo; Id ubi factum fuerit, facilè quid verum quid falſum judicabimus.* Brentius in Joh. 7. 17.

By all which you ſee, that they onely that taſte, can ſee God and his goodneſſe. Now to the improvement of this poynt.

1 Uſe.

1. This diſcovers the true reaſon of that ſmalneſſe of knowledge, and that little inſight into ſpirituall things, that is in the world

world, nay in ſo glorious a light as we have. Would you know why many ſoules are ſo dark? why men and women are *ever* [f] *learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth?* why they grope at noon day, and are to ſeek in the knowledge of the truth? [g] The fault is not in the word, but in themſelves. The true reaſon is this, They endeavour not to get taſtes of God, they work not by Rule, they walk not according to the light they have received, they are vain, looſe, and earthly in their lives: This is the Reaſon why men heare Sermon after Sermon, and ſtill are ignorant, [h] why thoſe that *for the time ought to be teachers, want inſtructing in the very firſt principles of the Oracles of God, and are become ſuch as have need of milke, and not of ſtrong meat.* They walk not as the Starlight of Nature, and the Moon-light of Reaſon doth direct them, nor as the Sunlight of Scripture and example doth require them: they never had any taſte of God, any holy deſires and endeavours to pleaſe God.

[f] 2 Tim. 3. 7.

[g] *Non crimen Phœbus, nocturna crimen habet.*

[h] Heb. 5. 12.

2 *Uſe.*

To mourn over thoſe that are filled with choyce ſpeculations, and bright notions in Religion, and yet ſee not God nor his goodneſſe at all, becauſe they [h] refuſe to taſte and try him and his wayes: They ſee truths, but not with a beleevers eyes, nor in his

[h] *Non in verbis ſed in factis res noſtræ religionis conſiſtunt.* Juſt. Martyr.

his light. A painter admiring a Landskip very plain, yet of rare workmanſhip, and hearing a ſilly fellow ask what worth hee ſaw in that poore piece, anſwered, Couldſt thou ſee with my eyes, thou wouldſt wiſh thy ſelf all eye, and be raviſhed with it. And ſo, could carnally minded men but ſee truths with a beleevers eyes, and in Gods light, Oh how would they love Jeſus Chriſt, and prize holineſſe? Well, theſe with all their knowledge are as tinkling Cymbals in the eares of God; which make ſcory muſicke without any diſtinction of notes.

[1] *Quanto plus & melius ſcis, tanto gravius inde judicaberis, niſi ſanctius vixeris.* Chryſ.

They ſay wee ſee, and therefore their ſinne remaines: but *John* ſaith, they are downright lyars, 1 *John* 2. 4. *He that ſaith, I know him, and keepes not his commandements, is a lyar, and the truth is not in him.* He that ſaith, I [k]know God, and yet takes no delight nor joy in God, is the loudeſt lyar under heaven; for he knowes not God at all as he ought to know him, and *as the truth is in Jeſus.* And ſurely the loweſt and hotteſt place in hell is kept for theſe, they *ſhall bee beaten with many ſtripes*, and laſht with whips of Scorpions, that *knew their maſters will and did it not. Sapientes ſapienter deſcendunt in infernum*, ſaith *Bernard*, they ſhall be damned with a witneſſe, and curſe the time that ever they heard of Chriſt, or

[k] One day God will require of men, *non quid legerint, ſed quid egerint, nec quid dixerint, ſed quomodo vixerint.*

Bernard. Rom. 1. 21. 24.

or knew his wil, for this wil add unto their plagues.

3. *Uſe.*

3. The main thing will be to ſearch and enquire, whether we ſo ſee, as withall to taſte Gods goodneſſe, viz. whether our viſions are of the right complexion yea or no.

1 *Character.*

[1] Such as had lived long without making progreſſe in knowledge, were called by *Philo* very properly, *Longævi pueri*, B. Cowper on Pſa. 119. 9.

Firſt, doe you thirſt after [1] more knowledge, and lye panting for clearer viſions of God? This you could not doe, but that you have taſted Gods goodneſſe, and ſo long to ſee and know, and enjoy more of it, *Pſal.* 119. 97. *Oh how I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day.* And at the 99. *v. I have more underſtanding then my Teachers.* How came *David* to bee continually meditating of the Word, and getting more and more knowledge of God? Why he loved the Lord ſo as could not be expreſſed. Oh how I love him! Hee had taſted divine goodneſſe, and ſo came to ſee ſo much of God. But ſee 1 *Pet.* 2. 2, 3. *As new borne babes deſire the ſincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby, if ſo be you have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* q.d. Elſe I ſhall in vain preſſe you to labour for more knowledge: for wicked ones [m] deſire not the knowledge of God, or his wayes, *They love Darkneſſe rather then Light*, ſaith Chriſt.

[m] Job. 21. 14.

Se-

Secondly, is thy knowledge experimentall? Then haſt thou taſted God. Brethren, the knowledge of a formall profeſſor, or nominall Chriſtian, is much like the ſpeculative knowledge of a Geographer, that ſits in his dry chamber & warm gown, looking on a Map of the world, or turning his Globe, where he beholds the Rockes and Streights without any danger or feare; with his finger and nimble wit, he flies over the moſt boyſterous and tempeſtuous Seas, and now is in pleaſant Countries, rich Mines, ſpicy Gardens, but all this in fancy, not fruition: [n] So it is with a formall Profeſſor, he gathers all his knowledge out of bookes, diſcourſes and Sermons, nothing by experience: Whereas a true beleever, as hee can diſcourſe of the joyes of heaven, ſo hee clearly ſees them (with *Stephen*) by the eye of Faith, and ſenſibly feedes on them by the power of hope; he ſtands not on the ſhore, obſerving the tempeſtuous ſeas and temptations in which others toyle, but himſelfe is miſerably toſſed too & fro, and turmoyled in the tempeſt, and by the grace of God he gets through all, and is more then conquerour. He doth not onely read of Cryſtal fountaines, ſpicy Iſlands, and rocks of Diamonds but he himſelf is inriched & inveſted with them, and his ſoule is filled with ſpirituall ſweet-

2 *Character.*

[n] *Quam multi ſunt qui ſermone valent & loquuntur, non tamen ſale cœleſti conditi ſũt, recẽſentq; multa de menſa regiâ quorum nullum adepti ſunt guſtum.* Macarho. 16.

ſweetneſſe. Is thy knowledge thus experimentall, as *Jobs* was, [o] *Job* 42. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the eare, but now mine eye ſeeth thee.* i. e. Moſt of thee, *Job* had knowledge afore; but now in his trials and afflictions he was taken off from the world, and taſted communion with God more then ever, and now he ſees God by a clearer light. *Ab now mine eyes ſee thee.* q. d. My ſoule was in a miſt till now, but now I have clearer viſions of thy glory and ſplendor.

[o] *Titelman* reſtrains it to a bodily ſight of God appearing then in a viſible ſhape, but others ſay it deſcribes celeſtiall viſions & appearances of Chriſt to the ſoule.

3. *Charact.*

Thirdly, is thy knowledge diffuſive? Art thou informing others, and doing all the good thou art able, that ignorance may be cudgel'd out of mens mindes, and that ſome chink may be opened to let in the light of the Goſpell? Is this thy deſigne, endeavour and delight? Then ſurely thou haſt taſted and ſeen God in his goodneſſe, [p] *Prov.* 10. 21. *The lippes of the Righteous will feed many.* Others monopolize knowledge to themſelves, leſt others ſhould outſtrip and darken them; but (mark) *the lips of the righteous will feed many.*

[p] *Vide* Thom. Cartwright, & Dr Jermin on Pro. 10. 21.

'Tis a table furniſhed, not with earthly, but heavenly dainties, and 'tis a free table, ſuch as come, are welcome. *David* (ſaith *Gregory*) prayes for a *Dore*, not a *Barre*, (*Keep, O Lord, the Dore of my lips*) Now a *dore* ſaith

[q] *Oſtium non obſtaculũ, quia oſtium & clauditur & aperitur*, Greg.

(ſaith the Father) is both ſhut and opened, and therefore though the lips of the righteous be ſhut, that no hurtfull thing come forth, yet they will open alſo in a free hoſpitality, whereby to feed many. *Philip* having taſted communion with Chriſt, was not contented to ſee Chriſt himſelf, unleſſe he call *Nathanael*, ſaying, [r] *Come and ſee*; and the [s] woman of *Samaria* calleth her kindred to ſee the worlds Saviour. This is the nature of ſpirituall knowledge, that is accompanied with taſtes of Gods goodneſſe, [t] *They cannot but ſpeake the things that they have heard and ſeen.* They *beleeve and therefore ſpeak.* *Socrates* (an *Heathen*) knowing there was but *one God*, ſaid in his Apology for his life, that if they would give him his life on condition to keep that truth to himſelfe, and not to teach it to others, he was reſolved rather to dye, for he would not promiſe that (*viz.* ſilence) which hee knew himſelfe unable to perform; for hee could not bury ſuch a truth by ſealing up his lips; much leſſe can they that ſee truth by a clearer light, keep it to themſelves, like new wine it muſt have a vent.

r John 1.45.

s 4.28.

[t] *Latum diſcrimen inter corporalia & ſpiritualia bona, nam ſi quis reperiret in agro aliquo thaſaurum, eo ſolus uti vellet, nec cuipiam patefaceret.* Muſculus in John 4. 28. *At verè Chriſti cognitionis natura eſt, ut qui eam nactus fuerit nihil habeat prius quam plurimis eam communicare.* Martin Bucerus. *Neque enim ſepulta & otioſa latere poteſt in fidelium cordibus Dei cognitio quin ſe apud homines proferat.* Calvinus.

Fourthly,

4. Charact. Rom. 14. 5.

Fourthly, is thy knowledge backt with full aſſurance and ſtrong confidence (I ſay not in all things at all times.) This ſeeing hath taſting joyned with it. 1 *Joh.* 2. 3. *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keepe his commandements.* q. d. If we taſte communion and take delight in him & his wayes, then our knowledge will be backt with full aſſurance. *Though an* [u] *Angel from heaven preach any other doctrine, let him be accurſed,* ſaid zealous *Paul*, that knew whom and what he had beleeved, and reſolved not to be cheated of truth: But now an hypocrite may know and take up many things on truſt, and at laſt begin to beleeve them; but yet notwithſtanding they are cleare and ſtedfaſt, and fully reſolved in nothing, but [w] are *driven about with every winde of doctrine*; and dance after any pipe that playeth, (ſaith holy * *Bayn.*) See *Prov.* 14. 15. *Heb.* 13. 9. We may juſtly feare theſe never received truths *in the love of them*, they never taſted Gods goodneſſe.

[u] *Paulus meras flammas loquitur tamq; vehementèr ardet ut incipiat etiam quaſi angelis maledicere.* P. Martyr. in Gal. 1. 8.

[w] *Deus enim verbum ſummiſit in quo actis radicibus maneamus immoti; homines autem huc & illuc ſuis figmentis nos abducunt.* Calvinus in Eph. 4. 14. *Circumferri ergo omni vento doctrinæ eſt ad quamvis doctrinam oblatam de ſincerâ ac verâ doctrinâ, addubitare, eſt ſeduci nunc his nunc aliis doctrinis.* Erasmus Sarcerius. * P. Bayn on Eph. 4. 14.

5. Charact. [x] *Altiſſima flumina minimo ſono labuntur.* Q. Curtius. l. 7.

Fifthly, art thou [x] humble in the midſt of light and gifts? Doth thy knowledge beat down pride and conceitedneſs and frowardneſſe, and make thee patient, humble, and

and teacheable in heavenly things; Theſe are celeſtiall viſions, *James* 3. 17. *The wiſdome that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle and eaſie to be intreated, full of mercy, &c.* q. d. There is a wiſdome or viſion that is not from above, and that is *earthly, ſenſuall and devilliſh*, full of envy, ſtrife and unquietneſſe; Pride is a vayle before their eyes, that they cannot ſee God: But the wiſdome that comes from above, a ſparke falling from the father of lights, that's accompanied with meekneſſe and [y] humility. See *Job* 42. 6. *Now mine eyes ſee thee, therefore I abhorre my ſelfe in duſt and aſhes*, q. d. Lord now I begin as through a crevice to diſcover thy purity and beauty, I cannot but abhorre my ſelfe for all the unſutableneſſe, and defilement that cleaves to me, when I ſee how unlike I am unto thee! &c.

But now if men vapour and count themſelves above ordinances, and begin *to deſpiſe propheſying*, theſe never tafted, neither doe they rightly ſee God, or any thing of God. 1 *Cor.* 8. 2. *If any man think he knows any thing* (alas! poore heart I pity him) *for he knows nothing as he ought to know, but if any man love God, the ſame is knowne of him* [z]. Intimating that ſuch as boaſt of their knowledge, know nothing aright, and never loved God nor tafted his goodneſſe.

[y] Vide *Titelmannum in locum.*

[z] *Epicurus* ſaid that he was the firſt man that ever diſcovered truth, who yet in many things was blinder then a beetle; But *Socrates* cryed this one thing I know that I know nothing. *Trap.* on 1 *Cor.* 8. 2.

6 Charact.

Sixtly and laſtly, doth thy knowledge better thee, and make thee ſtill more holy and more heavenly? This knowledge is right, thou haſt at once taſted and ſeene God. [a] See 2 Cor. 3. 18. *But we with open face beholding in a glaſſe the glory of the Lord Jeſus, are changed into the ſame image from glory to glory.* When the ſoule begins to ſpy Chriſt, and views his beauty in the cleare cryſtall glaſſe of the Word, by a ſtrange metamorphoſis, 'tis ſuddenly turned into the ſame image, whilſt certain ſparkles of his glory are ſhed in upon the heart.

[a] *Nam evangelii doctrina vivum eſt ſpeculum in quo Chriſti effigiem contemplantes in eam transfigurantur, & ubi non adeſt pura conſcientia non niſi inane ſcientiæ ſpectrum eſſe poteſt.* Calvin. in 1 Joh. 2. 3.

You ſee the right viſions of God are tranſforming, bettering, beautifying viſions, as the pearle by the often beating of the Sunbeames upon it becomes radiant; An orient ſplendor ſhines on that ſoule that hath ſeen Chriſt.

4. Vſe.

4. Can they onely clearely ſee that have taſted God and his goodneſſe? then it concerns us all to labour for ſuch diſcoveries of God as may have a witneſſe within us, even for experimentall knowledge in the things of heaven; Others may fill their heads with metaphyſicall notions in divinitie, as the Schoolmen that weave it into cobwebs, but a little ſanctified knowledge will goe a great way; [b] The Sun is not ſeen but by his own beames: Say with *David*; *In thy light we ſhall ſee light.* What ſaid a Father?

[b] *Non omnes qui divina eloquia legũt, quæ in illis admiranda ſunt conſiderant, niſi qui cœleſti ſplẽdore & gratiã potiuntur.* Baſil.

Father? Methinks I see great Doctors and profound Rabbies, with all their speculations crowding into hell to be *beaten with many stripes*, whilst silly old women with a little sanctified knowledg of God in Christ drop in at heavens gate, and are crowned with Diadems! Oh that all of you could say to me as the Woman of *Samaria* her friends whom she called out to Christ, said to her, [c] *Joh.* 4. 42. *Now we beleeve, not because of thy saying, for we have heard and seene him our selves, and know that this indeed is the Christ, the Saviour of the world.* Mark, when they had once tasted communion with the Messiah, they clearely saw and knew him, no longer now by hearesay, but sweet experience. We may rise up early, and goe to bed late, to unfold divine mysteries for you, and wee may open the glorious things of eternity to you, but till you will take up your Bibles, and look more narrowly into these things, and like noble *Bereans, search the Scriptures*, whether that which we deliver be so or no [d], till you will down upon your knees and seek God in secret for light, and endeavour to live up to received light; surely all our paines is but ploughing of a rock, or a watering a dry & rootlesse stake in the hedge, which will never be fruitfull; some chaos of confused notions may swim in your heads, & you may think you know

 enough,

[c] *Ista non ideò dicũtur, ut ministeriũ mulieris hujus quo benè fuerãt usi, contemptum fuisse intelligamus; absit; sed ut extollãtur ea quæ ex ipso Christo audierant, supra testimoniũ mulieris*; Ita Musculus in Joh. 4. 42. q d *Parcius tu quidem prædicasti de Jesu, quam ipsa habet res*. Bullingerus in Loc.

[d] *Austin* beg'd of God that if it were his pleasure *Moses* might come unto him to tell him the meaning of some Texts in *Genesis*. Doe thou call out for his Spirit, he can best teach thee. When *John* wept much, Christ opened the book sea-

led with ſeven ſcales. *Rev.* 5. 4, 5.

enough, but as ſure as the Lord is in heaven, and you will nere come there, if you paſſe away in this golden dream, you'll never have full, diſtinct, and cleare knowledge of God, and the myſteries of ſalvation; for till you taſte you can never ſee how good the Lord is.

5 *Uſe.*

[c] *Eadem ratio contrariorum.*

Laſtly, by the rule of contraries, which alwayes holds true [c]; As you cannot ſee unleſſe you taſte, ſo likewiſe you cannot taſte unleſſe alſo you ſee ſomewhat of God; without ſome taſting there's no cleare viſion, and without ſome knowledge there's no right taſting. The will and affections boyle up as the underſtanding is inlightned and principled, for *Ignoti nulla cupido*, a man cannot let out his deſires after unknowne things. Sound knowledge breeds holy affections, and enkindles heavenly deſires after God. We muſt firſt diſcover ſome want of Chriſt, and worth in Chriſt, ere our hearts can bray and pant after him. [f] See *John* 4. 10. *If thou kneweſt the gift of God,* ſaith Chriſt to that woman, *and who it is that ſaith, give me to drinke, thou wouldſt have long'd to be taſting of his living waters that now ſpeakes to thee.* So that no ſeeing or knowing, no taſting; they are loving twinns that are never aſunder; the ſoule muſt have a glimpſe of God, or it can never taſte his goodneſſe. One that is blinde may yet feed heartily,

Ignoti nulla cupido.

[f] *Simul admonet Chriſtus quam efficax ſit honorii ſuorum cognitio, utpote ad ea expetenda nos ſtimulat, animoſq; noſtros accendit: Si ſcires, inquit, petieras.* Calvinus in Joh. 4. 10.

heartily, but not ſo here, for our [g] zeale muſt be according to knowledge, *Rom.* 10. 2. elſe we ſhall be like a ſmall ſhip without ballaſt, or fraught, but with mighty ſayles, which is ſooner either toppled over, or daſht againſt a rock; zeale without knowledge is like a ſtring in an Inſtrument over-ſtrained beyond the proportion of ſound wherein is harmony, which makes a ſqueaking and unpleaſant noyſe; & 'tis uſually compared to fire, not on the hearth, but in the middle of the roome, which inſtead of roaſting the meat may burne the houſe; or to mettle in a blinde horſe, which makes him ruſh againſt the wall and hurt his rider.

Blind devotion (in Papiſts and others) God abhorres, therefore wee muſt ſee and know God in ſome meaſure, or we can never taſte him and ſavour ſpirituall things aright: But when the day-ſtarre begins to ariſe in our minds, this glimmering light breeds in us an unſpeakable refreſhing and * gladneſſe of heart in Gods preſence, and it ſets a mans ſoule upon a conſtant wondring at the glory of the things revealed: The man ſees in a mirrour, he ſees and admires, he ſees and rejoyceth, nothing more tranſports and raviſhes the heart, then viſions of God ſmiling in the face of Chriſt.

Thus you have heard that as a man cannot ſee unleſſe he taſte, ſo he cannot taſte

[g] *Elu-Parr* on Rom. 10. 2. Pag. 122.

1. A zeale according to knowledge. *Exod.* 32. 27. 1 *Reg.* 18. 40. 2. Not ſo, in *Philip.* 3. 6. 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. *Acts* 13 So *Latimer* ſaith before his cõverſion he was a moſt fiery and obſtinate Papiſt.

* *Gaudere niſi ſapienti negat Stoici.* Aug. de Civ. Dei. Lib. 14. Cap. 8.

Concluſio.

unleſſe he ſee God, both muſt goe together, and therefore content not your ſelves with one, unleſſe you have the other, *what God hath joyned together, let no man ſeparate.* Taſte and ſee how good the Lord is. Taſting without ſeeing will be blinde devotion, ſeeing without taſting will be naked ſpeculation, taſting and ſeeing together will be ſincere converſion.

5. *Doct.* The Lord is exceeding good unto all his people, yea he is goodneſſe[h] and perfection, and ſweetneſſe it ſelfe.

[h] *Suavitas & Bonitas Dei, quam in Chriſto ſentimus allicere nos debet.* Calvin. in 1 Pet. 2. 3.

Davids argument to prevaile with you to taſte and ſee God, is drawne (you ſee) from the goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe of God; ſo then this is our laſt poynt which is few words, but full of matter, *God is good.*

See it proved from inſpired and heathenish quills.

1. The Scripture in every leafe confirmes it, *Pſal.* 119. 68. *Thou art good, and doeſt good.* Thou art good in thy ſelfe, nay goodneſſe it ſelfe, and an overflowing fountain, as thou art, ſo thou doeſt good. The Lord beſt knows his own excellencies. See *Exod.* 34. 6. God proclaim'd himſelfe, to be *mercifull and gracious, abundant in goodneſſe and truth,* &c.

[i] *Deus optimus. & quidē ante Optimus quia maximus eſt*

2. [i] The very Heathens maintaine this poynt, in calling God *Optimum, Maximum,* that is, the beſt and greateſt; ſo *Tully* moſt fre-

frequently: *Plato* call'd him the horn of plenty, and the Ocean of beauty, without the leaſt ſpot of injuſtice. *Socrates* ſaith, God is the beſt and happieſt good, and the neerer we come to his likeneſſe, the better and happier are we. *Seneca* up and down his Epiſtles goes very farre in this poynt, ſo that he is called by ſome Divine *Seneca*; A man may prove it philoſophically that God is good. 1. God is the chiefe being, and therefore the chiefe good, becauſe Entity (or being) and goodneſſe are termes convertible. 2. Among the creatures there are found many things good, therefore much more is their Creator good. *Quicquid enim in effectu eſt, id longè præſtantius in cauſâ invenitur.* 3. A thing is ſaid to be good in that it is perfect, but God is eſſentially and abſolutely perfect, *Ergo.* 4. The better a thing is, the more communicative 'twill be, for *Bonum eſt ſui communicativum*, but God is ever making forth his goodneſſe to the creature in creation and preſervation. *Ergo.* 5. That is good which is the centre of all deſires, ſo is God. *Deum omnia appetunt entia, non primo, ſed quia eſſe appetunt*, ſaith *Scaliger.*

prodeſſe omnibus quam opes magnas habere. Tull. de Naturâ Deorum. Lib. 2. *Deus nullo uſpiam modo injuſtus ſed plane juſtiſſimus, nec ei quiſquã ſimilior inveniri poteſt, quã qui inter nos juſtiſſimus fuerit. Plato in Theæteto & in Timæo. Deus omnium optimus & ſæliciſſimus, ad hujus ſimilitudinem quo quiſq; propius accedit hoc & melior & beatior dixit Socrates.* Rot. lib. 3. Apoph. *Seneca paſſim in Epiſtolis, & in libro de Beat. Vita ca. 20. & in lib. 4. de Benef. cap. 28.*

Bonum eſt a quo omnia pendent, quodq; omnia appetunt, accipientia ab ipſo principium, ejuſq; penitus indiga, ipſum vero nullius egenum, ipſum ſibi ſufficiens, nihil penitus appetens, menſura omnium atq; terminus. Plotin. lib. 8. Ennead. 1. c. 2. *Deus bonus, imo ipſum bonum eſt, nec aliud quicquam præter bonum.* Triſm. ſer. 2. Pimandri.

But

But now to pitch on ſome particulars. We will enquire. 1. What this goodneſſe of God is? 2. How it may be illuſtrated and ſet forth.

1 *Enqu.* What the goodneſſe of God is.

To the firſt I anſwer, Goodneſſe is the perfection of things for which they are deſireable. *Perfectum id eſt cui nihil deeſt*, That is perfect which wants nothing, God is thus good.

His goodneſſe may be thus deſcribed.

It is a communicable attribute, whereby the divine eſſence is in, and of it ſelfe, mercifull, good, liberall, and bountifull, communicating good to the creature[k]; yea to ſpeake properly, God is goodneſſe it ſelfe, for there is no accident in God, whatſoever is in God is God; for God is ſuch as that whatſoever is in him is eſſentiall, ſo that goodneſſe is God, and God is goodneſſe. *Pſal.* 144. 2. *My goodneſſe*, ſo he calls the Lord.

[k] *In Deo nihil eſt quod non ſit ipſe Deus.* Zanch.

2[d] *Enqu.* To the ſecond Enquiry I anſwer, the goodneſſe of God may be illuſtrated & ſet forth by ſeven Epithites.

1 *Epithite.* Univerſall good. Pſal. 145. 9. Luk. 6. 35.

1. 'Tis ſo communicative, that he is a generall and univerſall good. *Pſal.* 145. 9. *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. He is kinde to the unthankfull, and unto the evill*, Luk. 6. 35.

Good

Good to his enemies, yea to all his creatures, *good to man and beaſt.* Pſal. 73. *The whole earth is full of his goodneſſe*; In their creation he made all things perfectly good in themſelves, and relatively good for ſome uſe to others; In their[1] ſuſtentation he continually preſerves and governs them; all their life and motion comes from him; The young ravens taſte of his bounty, he openeth his hand and all the creatures are ſatisfied, *he cauſeth the Sun to ſhine and rain to fall on juſt and unjuſt.* Thus you ſee he ſcatters common beames of his goodneſſe o're the whole creation, &c.

[1] *Vide* Marlorat. in Mat. 5. 45.

Nay to ſhew that God is indeed an univerſall good, let me tell you the very devills and damned in hell do partake of his goodneſſe. For if God be infinite,

[m] Genebrard. in Pſal. 145. 9.

1. In wiſdome, to deviſe ſtill greater and crueller Torments, if he pleaſe.

2. In power, by ſtrong hand to put them, when he will, with eaſe, into execution.

3. In juſtice, eternally and infinitly to puniſh ſin committed againſt it, there being ſufficient foundation of guilt in the creature to cleare and juſtifie God in his proceedings. Then it is evident he could inflict ſorer puniſhments on the damned, then he now doth; for then a thing is infinite when it hath no end, but hath ſtill a farther ſtep to goe. *Ergo*, &c.

Object.

Object.

Sol.

Obj. I but 'tis ſaid, they ſhall have *judgement without mercy*, Jam. 2. 13.

Sol. Tis called *judgement without mercy*, in two reſpects, Duration, and Apprehenſion.

1. [n] In Duration: For they ſhall never to eternity be eaſed of the leaſt jot of that puniſhment once inflicted on them.

2. In Apprehenſion, becauſe the greatneſſe of their inſufferable torments, doth ſwallow up all ſenſe of mercy, and make them think the Lord could not inflict ſorer puniſhments upon them.

Queſt. But wherein can the Devils partake of this goodneſſe?

Anſ. Why in three things, Being, Mitigation, and Employment.

1. In their very Being, not onely in reſpect of their firſt eſtate, [o] when in the beginning of the world, they were made glorious creatures, ſpirituall, immortall, intellectuall, free, holy, wiſe, powerfull, and the inhabitants of Paradiſe, capable of ſeeing God clearly: But alſo in their preſent condition, they are his Creatures; for he made them Angels, though not He, but ſin made them Devils, and their Being is continued from God, and ſome [p] godly learned have maintained Condemnation to be a leſſe evill then Annihilation.

2. In mitigation of their deſerved puniſhment:

[n] *ubi mors ſine morte, finis ſine fine, defectus ſine defectu, quia & mors ſemper vivit, & finis ſemper incipit, & defectus deficere neſcit.* Greg. mor. l. 9. c. 47. *Vide I. Yates* modell of Divinity, p. 58. & Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 21. c. 3.

[o] Coloſſ. 1. 16. In the beginning of time not the beginning of eternity. *Amb. Hex. l. 1. c. 4. Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 11. c. 32.*

[p] Dr. *Twiſſe* lately Prol. to the Aſſembly of Divines; now in glory.

nishment: For certain it is, they are not punished according to the height of that measure of punishment which their sinnes have merited, and Gods wisdome, justice, and power could inflict upon them. For their heynous offence [q] deserved not one Hell onely, but a thousand hells, because in so high a State, without any temptation. [r] *Matth.* 8.29. And the evill Spirits cryed out, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* Whence we may conclude, there is a time comming when the Devils shall bee more tormented then they are as yet.

3. In Employment, and in respect of their ministery, [s] because the chief mirth of Devils is to doe mischief, & they are most pleased when God doth use them to try the good, or fry the wicked; or if his mercy doe not extend to them in this employment, yet it is undoubtedly shewed in them, by bringing light out of darknesse, in using such impious and bad Agents for effecting of his good ends. And thus the Lord suffered Satan to perplex *Job* for his [t] good, though there might be in the Devill a will to destroy: *But all power is of God*, Rom. 13. 1.

Thus you see the very damned and Devils partake of Gods goodnesse, and that there is no place that can bee imagined, wherein there is not some impression of Divine

[q] Albin. quæst. in Genes.

[r] David Dixon in exposition on Mat. 8.29.

[s] *Dæmones sunt spiritus nocendi cupidissimi, à justitia penitus alieni, superbia tumidi, invidētia lividi, fallacia calidi.* Aug. de Civ. Dei. lib. 8. cap. 12.

[t] Lombard Sent. l. 2. dist. 44.

Divine goodneſſe: And therefore well might *David* ſay, *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his* [u] *workes.* When he plagues us, 'tis leſſe then our iniquities deſerve: for God pitieth his own works even then when he puniſhes ours, i.e. our ſinnes. [w] If *Paul* being but one poore veſſell, was ſo richly laden with Divine goodneſſe and patience (as 1 *Tim.* 1. 16.) how is this great Bark of the world then fraught?

2. As Divine goodneſſe is univerſall to all, ſo it is a ſpeciall and peculiar goodneſſe to the elect, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. He is the Saviour of all (*viz.* in a common way of providence he doth good unto all:) but he is [x] eſpecially good to beleevers. His peculiar goodneſſe to them appeares in his electing love, and chuſing them from eternity out of the maſſe of corruption, to be choſen veſſels of his mercy, and *all ages muſt wonder at his kindneſſe to them in Jeſus Chriſt.* Epheſ. 2. 7. Theſe he inwardly and effectually calls to himſelfe, and having purged and ſanctified them, he adorns them with all the Jewels of grace, and makes them *a peculiar people, zealous of good workes*; he forgives all their unkindneſſes, and *who can tell how oft he offends?* He ſweetens and ſanctifies all their ſtraights, and gives them communion with himſelfe in all conditions; and finally, receives

u God was but 6 dayes in making the world, 7 in deſtroying one Citie *Jericho*. Chryſ.

w *Tho. Goodwin.* Aggr. of ſinning againſt knowledge & mercy. p 97.

2. *Epithite.*

x *Quibus non tantum dat corporalia bona, ſed etiam ſpiritualia; fidem, ſpem, patientiam & cõſtantiam; teſtatur ſanctos vere eſſe curæ Deo, non negligi eos omnino,* Luke 12. 6. Aug. Marlorat in 1 Tim. 4. 10

ceives them up into the clouds, to be in his boſome for ever. Incomprehenſible is his ſweetneſſe and indulgence to his own people, he is exceeding courteous and affable to them; he rayes forth the diſcoveries of peculiar love on them, which makes *more happy then when corn, wine, and oyle increaſeth*, and hereby they lead heaven on earth. [y] Now this is childrens bread, and Dogges may not eat of it; he gives outward bleſſings to the worſt, not in love, but as one flings a bone to a dogge. When [z] *Cyrus* gave *Artabazus* a cup of gold, and *Chryſanthas* a kiſſe (in token of ſpeciall favour) *Artabazus* complained that the cup he gave him, was not ſo good gold as the kiſſe he gave *Chryſanthas*.[a] Why ſo a Chriſtian rejoyces more in the ſweet kiſſes of Chriſts lips, for ſo are the pledges of divine love termed, *Cant.* 1.2. I mean with true ſpirituall bleſſings, then if hee ſhould give him all the treaſures of the world: [b] To be able to ſay, *God is mine*, is better then a thouſand mines of gold, *Pſal.* 144. 15.

3. God is an Independent good. Indeed there is no other Independent Being, though this name be given to ſome: God onely is independent, and hath all in himſelfe and from himſelfe, without reference to others, or being beholding to any for what he is or hath, *Pſal.* 16. 2. [c] *O my ſoul, thou*

[y] *Luce ſolis, vitali ſpiritu, terræq, alimentis omnes communiter fruuntur, ſed benedictio que in Chriſto ſperanda eſt panis filiorum.* Calv. in Mat. 15. 26

[z] *Xenophon.*

[a] *Cœli & terram bonitate implevit, ſed panis dicitur quicquid ad filiorum adoptionem ſpectat.* Calv. ut ſupra.

[b] Dr *Stoughton* in his choyce Sermons.

3d *Epithite.* Independent good.

[c] *H. Ainſworth* in Pſal. 16. 2.

thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, *My goodneſſe extendeth not unto thee.* The Chaldee reades it, *My good is not given but of thee.* But the Seventy thus, *Of my goods thou haſt no need*; [d] with which your tranſlation ſuits, that ſaith, *My goodneſſe extendeth not to thee. Can a man be profitable to God* (ſaith *Eliphaz*) *Job.* 22. 2. [e] And *if thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him, or what receives hee at thy hand*, ſaith *Elihu? Job* 35. 7. He is *Elſhaddai*, a God of all ſufficiency in himſelf. *If I were hungry, ſure I would not tell thee*, ſaith God, *for the world is mine, and all the fulneſſe thereof*, Pſal. 50. 12.

[d] *Nihil jubet quod ſibi prodeſt.* Auguſtin.

[e] *Non accedet Deo quicquam utilitatis ſi in innocentia vitam tegeris, ſicut è contrario nihil damni vel incommodi ex hominum impietate ille accipit.* Fran. Titelman in Job. 22. 2. *Bonorum enim noſtrorum ipſe non indiget; non accipit de domo noſtra vitulos neque de gregibus noſtris hircos: omnia ab ipſo habemus, ut noſtris donis vel bonis non poſſit in aliquo ditior evadere aut beatior, quia ex ſua natura ſibi eſt ſufficientiſſimus, nullius rei indigens vel indigere potens.* Idem in Job 35. 7.

[f] *Vide* Doctor *Preſton* his new Covenant on Gen. 17. 1. pag. 27. & 158

[f] Thus you ſee God is an Independent good, he hath a bottomleſſe fountaine of goodneſſe within him, ſo that he needs not our praiſes, or ſervices, he is moſt perfectly bleſſed, and happy, and glorious in himſelfe, and all the creatures cannot add ſo much to his goodneſſe, or felicity, as a drop doth to the Ocean, or a ſpark unto a Bonfire.

Shall I need to illuſtrate and confirme this truth unto you? It may eaſily be done:

done: Conſider three things.

Firſt, God was thus good and happy, and all-ſufficient, before the world was, or creature was; therefore on whom ſhould he depend? Pſal. 90. *Before the mountaines were made, or the hils were laid, from everlaſting thou art God.* He made the world, not that he had need of it, or any thing in it, but to communicate his goodneſſe, and to make known his praiſe. From eternity God was taken up with the ſurveyes of his own beauties and perfections.

Secondly, that g good which the creature hath, God muſt needs be the authour of it all: For, *what have we which we have not received?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. 'Tis the Spiders Motto, *Nemini debeo*; for ſhe climbs up by a threed of her own weaving, and the matter of it is ſpun out of her own bowels. But even this creature, and all others, have their *eſſe* and *bene eſſe*, being and well-being from God. Wealth, beauty, and honour, &c. all from him; ſo that there is no room for boaſting, we may not *ſacrifice to our own net.* Now he muſt needs be ſufficient of himſelfe, that is ſufficient for all other things. h Nay,

Thirdly, that good and i perfection

g *Nemo hominum quicquam excellentiæ à ſeipſo habet.* Calvinus in 1 Cor. 4. 7. *Nam nihil eſt aut donorum aut chariſmatum quod ſpiritui ſancto non debet acceptum referri, & quicquid in nobis eſt aut facultatis aut energiæ, id totum Dei depoſitum, animis noſtris commodatum,* P. Martyr in loc.

h *Nõ poteſt ſũmus rerũ conditor in ſe non habere quæ rebus à ſe conditis dedit quemadmodum ſol aſtris.* Hugo de anima. lib. 4. cap. 15.

i *Quicquid bonitatis in creatura reperitur id oportet eſſe ex Deo tanquã fonte omnis boni.* Idem in Matth. 19. 17. *creata omnia perfectius ſunt in Deo quam in ſeipſo.* Dionyſ. de Divin. cap. 7.

that

that is in the creature, was firſt in God, and moſt perfect and good there. All was after the divine Image, *Gen.* 1. 27. they depend upon God as the effigies in a Looking-glaſſe on the face, which likewiſe was more perfect in the face before it appeared in the glaſſe. See *Jam.* 1. 17. *Every good and perfect gift comes down from above, & deſcends from the Father of lights.* Mark the ſimilitude: As beames flow from the Sunne, and are of the like nature, but were more perfect in the Sunne ere they flow'd there: ſo all the good which is in the creature, did not onely proceed from God as the Author and Creator, but was firſt in God; certain [k] rayes ſhooting from that *Sunne of Righteouſneſſe*, as Chriſt is called, *Mal.* 4. 2. Mans goodneſſe is but the beam, the image, which is not ſo perfect as the Sun, or face; man may be good in the concrete, but the Lord is good in the abſtract.

By theſe three things you ſee God is no borrowed, but a moſt independent good in himſelfe, and that all the creatures neither do, nor can add to it. The bounty of Kings is but as that of the clouds, which though they ſhowre down plentifully, yet they firſt received all from the earth below them. Now GOD hath all in himſelfe, without any dependance on others, [l] but all things as they had their excellency from him,

[k] The *Platoniques* who yet were heathes, held that whatſoever good is in the creature, it is but *ſplendor quidam ſummi illius boni.* A ſparkle or beam of that infinite goodneſſe that is in God. And they ſaid, that then only was the good wch is in the creature rightly uſed, when by it men learned to go up & return to the Creator. Bp. *Cowper* on Pſal. 119. 57.

[l] *Pulchrum cœlum, pulchra terra (& ſic pulchra anima) ſed pulchrior qui fecit illa.* Aug.

him, ſo they depend upon him for continuation.

4. God is a Free Good; the goodneſſe of God is free, and therefore it is frequently called *The grace of God*. Free grace and goodneſſe in God are all one. See 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. *If yee have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* Divers think *Peter* hath reference to my Text, and ſo make goodneſſe and graciouſneſſe in God all one. Grace is nothing but the free favour and goodneſſe of God to his people. [m] Rom. 3. 24. *You are juſtified freely by his grace.* Now this excludes not only Gods eying, but our having any foundation of deſert in us, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *We are called not according to workes, but his owne purpoſe and grace.* And therefore *Iſai.* 55. 1. 2. [n] you'l ſee God hath no impulſive moving cauſe in him to doe us good, but onely his good will and pleaſure: for there he

4. *Epithite.*

[m] *Nullo enim noſtro merito, ſed ſua ipſius gratia, & ſuapte voluntate ſpontaneaque beneficentia impulſus & commotus fecit hæc nobis Deus*, Gaſp. Megan. 2 Tim. 1, 9.

[n] *Quam ſitis inopes & exhauſti ſcio nec poſſe vos pretio tanti boni particpes fieri exploratum habeo. Non igitur merita virtutum a vobis, ut ad me adeatis exigo, cum ſitis contaminati flagitiis & criminibus ſummis obnoxii, non munera pietatis atque ſanctitatis efflagito, cum ſceleribus innumerabilibus alligati ſitis non deniq; par & æquale tantis bonis pretium poſco, cum fieri non poſſit, fidē tantum inceſſam & incitatam requiro, ut eam non ſecundum debitum, ſed ſecundum amplitudinem gratiæ meæ remunerem*, Hieronymus Oſorius in Paraph. in Iſai. 55. 1. pag. 200. *Dei gratia vocatur, quia gratis datur.* Aug. in Joan. *Quomodo eſt gratia ſi ex debito reddita?* Idem de Grat. Chriſt. cap. 23. *Niſi gratuita non eſt gratia.* Idem cap. 31. Iſai. 65. 1. 23. Hoſ. 14. 4.

freely invites us to partake of his goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe made out in Chriſt: *Ho! come, come, thirſty ſinners, buy wine and milk without money, and without price, hearken unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your ſoule delight in fatneſſe.* q. d. Taſte me freely, for I am good: Come moneyleſſe, penyleſſe, meritleſſe ſoules, and worthleſſe, graceleſſe ſinners, here is mercy in a Saviours boſome for you. You ſee all the good things of God are freely tendred to all ſinners without reſpect to any merit or deſert in men, which would eclipſe free grace, if not extinguiſh it. No, eternall life is *the gift of God*, not wages, but gift; not due, but free. 'Tis called a peny for the labourer, a crown for the conquerour; not that wee, but Chriſt hath earned it with good ſtore of ſweat and blood, and we by holy lives teſtifie the truth of our faith, which applies Chriſt; and God hath freely, yet firmly promiſed it, and ſo hath made himſelfe a debtor (ſaith *Auſtin*) ſo that ſtill God is a moſt free good.

5 *Epithite.* Abſolute and perfect.

5. God is an abſolute, ſutable, and perfect good unto the ſoule; Communion with God, and participation of divine goodneſſe and ſweetneſſe is a Chriſtians *Summum Bonum*, his chiefe good*. *Varro* collected out of the Philoſophers bookes 288 things, in which according to their ſeverall

* Sir *Robert Barkley* his *Summum bonum.*

ſeverall conceptions, they would place our *ſummum bonum*, mans chief good; And thus forſaking, or rather not ſpying the fountain *they digd unto themſelves broken ciſterns*, they ſhot wide and miſſed the mark, at which *David* aimed *Pſal.* 144.15. *Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe* (*viz.* incircled with all temporall bleſſings) *yea happy is that people whoſe God is the Lord.* So your Bibles read it, but the [p] Greek *Septuagint* tranſlates it thus: They count that people bleſſed that have theſe things, but I pronounce them happy, who have God for their Lord. Indeed to ſpeak the truth, God in Chriſt is not onely the chiefe, but onely good of the ſoule; as *Mat.* 19.17. [q] *There is none good but one that is God:* Chriſt as man puts by this Title; There is no abſolute compleat good but God; There is nothing the ſoule wants, but 'tis in God (there is a ſtreaming fountain of light and life in him) and there is nothing can fill and content the ſoule but God; give the childe rattles and cymballs, yet nothing will ſtill him but the breaſt; give the ſoule all the gewgaws and vanities of the world, and the riches of both the *Indies*, yet nothing will quiet the ſoule but God. The heart (ſaith *Hugo*) is little, yet it deſires great things, it cannot ſatisfie a bird of prey for its dinner, and yet the whole world cannot ſatiſ-

[p] *Hen. Ainſworth* on Pſa. 144.15. P. 185.

[q] *Mutabiles ſumus à bono in malum, & noſtra bonitas ad divinam collata, malitia eſt.* Theophylact in Mat. 19.17. *In vetuſtis exemplaribus legitur, τί με λέγεις, &c. Quid me interrogas de Bono? unus eſt Bonus.* Beza in locũ.

fie it; And how is it poſſible the world, which is globular, ſhould fill the Triangle of mans heart? Some nooks and corners will be empty, it will ſtill range after further ſatisfaction, but God can make us lie down contented, and ſee heaven opened before us. In all other things there is ſome diſproportion, imperfection, or emptineſſe, but in God fullneſſe dwells, and there is no deficiency in him, [r] naked Chriſt can make *Job* on the dunghill happy; The [f]ſoule that hath God ſaith it hath enough, nay wiſhes ſhe may be able to manage her joyes, and that the heart may not be too little for the comforts, and ſo break as old bottles filled with new wine, which was *Davids* feare, *Pſal.* 119. 20. For,

6. God is a moſt deſireable and delectable good; for the object of the will is good, nothing can be good but it is deſired, and nothing is deſired but 'tis really or ſeemingly good [t]; Now if goodneſſe be that which all deſire, and if all deſires be bent upon goodneſſe, then it muſt needs follow that all undeceived Chriſtiãs (who formerly miſtook their good) muſt needs deſire God the author of all good, Chriſt is the deſire & delight of Nations. As *John* leaned in Chriſts boſome, ſo doe all beleevers, and they ſolace themſelves in his embraces: [u] *Auſtin* ſpake ſweetly, Thou O Lord, haſt made

[r] *Habenti Deum nihil poteſt deeſſe.* Cyprian

[f] *Per dideràt omnia illa quæ dederat Deus ſed habebat ipſum qui omnia dederat, Deum.*

6 Epithite. Delectable good.

[t] *Beatitudo hominis eſt guſtus bonitatis D. i.* Scultetus in Pſal. 34. 6. pag. 272.

[u] *Feciſti nos domine propter te & ſemper inquietum eſt cor noſtrum donec requieſcat in te.* &c. Auguſt. confeſſ. lib. 1. cap. 3

made us for thee (thou art the loadſtone of our hearts, and the centre of our joyes) our poore hearts are never at quiet till they reſt in thee, our ſoules hanker after thee, when ſhall wee fully enjoy thee? As the Needle in a Diall ſtill trembles till it ſettle in the North poynt, ſo with *Noahs* [w] dove, the ſoule hovers up and down till it reſt upon the Ark Jeſus Chriſt; ſaying with *David*, *Return to thy reſt, O my ſoul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee:* now looſe thy ſelfe in a labyrinth of ſpirituall enjoyments. You ſee God is the moſt ſweet good, pleaſing and filling the ſoule with rich delight, and therefore here we are bid to taſte how good. *i. e.* how ſweet and delectable the Lord is. 'Tis uſually ſet out by [x] marrow and fatneſſe, to ſet forth his unconceivable ſweetneſſe. Oh there's amazing and raviſhing ſweetneſſe in the ſenſe of divine goodneſſe, that will drown all worldly ſweetneſſe (as the Sunne the Starres) and ſerve to uphold and revive the ſoule in the greateſt tryalls; This made the Martyrs to deny themſelves in all that is deare to fleſh and bloud, and embrace Chriſt and the ſtake together, for they were ſatisfied with divine goodneſſe, *Jer.* 31. 14.

w Of the ſending forth of this Dove, and of her returning unto *Noah* (whom Heathens name *Deucalion*) there is expreſſe mention in *Plutarch. Dialog. de Induſt. Animal.* This was a lively emblem of the ſoules reſting in Chriſt, who was typified by the Ark. *Amſworth.*

x Pſal. 63. 5. Marrow and fatneſſe. Both words in the originall ſignifie fatneſſe, and hereby is meant ſatiety of divine pleaſures, as Pſal. 36. 9. *Idem. Ornabit Deus opiparè convivium conquiſitiſſimis epulis & vino puriſſimo atq; defæcatiſſimo diligenter extructum & omnes nationes invitabit qui vocati*

cum incenſâ fide convenerint, participes ſuæ clementiæ, utq; benignitatis efficiet. H. Oſorius in Paraph. in Iſaiam 26. 6. v. Pag. 80. *Vid.* Pſal. 65. 11. Iſa. 53. 2. *Mt audite & eritis repente bonorum divinorum ubertate completi, animiq; veſtri præ rerum cœleſtium ſaturitate & copiâ, erunt ingenti gaudio cumulati.* Idem. Pag. 201. *Ignatius* the Martyr cryed, *Ignis, crux, beſtiæ, tota in me tormenta diaboli veniant tantum ut Chriſto fruar.* Drex. 12. Sig. Præd. Pag. 135.

7. *Epitbite.* Eternall good.

7. and laſtly, God is an eternall good, a laſting and an everlaſting good. How often is this comfortable word repeated in the book of Pſalmes; *The Lord is good and his mercy endureth for ever*, Pſal. 100. 5. and 106. 1. Now God is an eternall good eſſentially and relatively, as the Schools diſtinguiſh.

1. Eſſentially he is α and ω, without beginning or end, like a circle; Now God is goodneſſe who is thus eternall, and goodneſſe is the divine eſſence, therefore it muſt needs be as eternall as God. Some things have a beginning but no ending, as Angels and mens ſoules. Some things have no beginning and yet have an end, as the decrees in their finall accompliſhment; ſome things both beginning and ending, as all ſublunary things, but God and his goodneſſe have neither beginning nor ending.

y *Facile æternitas Dei evincitur. Nam* 1. *Deus ſit ſuum eſſe uniforme, ergo etiam eſt ſua æternitas.* Tho. Aquin. p. 1. q. 10. ar. 2. 2. *Sive motus ab æterno ponatur, quod dicit Philoſophus, ſive in tempore cæpiſſe aſſeratur, quod dicit veritas, perindè eſt ad æternitatem Dei commonſtrandam.* Gerhardi Loc. Theolog. Tom. 1. pag. 120.

2. God

2. God is an eternall good relatively in respect of others to whom this goodnesse doth peculiarly belong, and that two wayes.

1. *Ex Parte Ante*, looking to their election. *Eph.* 1. 4. *He hath chosen us before the foundation of the world.* No new thought can happen to the minde of God, for then he should be subject to change, and therefore all his thoughts of love and goodnesse must needs be as eternall as himselfe; And as this is a wonderfull prop to beleevers in their greatest tryalls; so the decrees of God are miserably abused by some, as two Martyrs [z] *Bradford* and [a] *Philpot* with griefe observed.

[z] Acts and Mon. *fol.* 1663.
[a] Idem *fol.* 1505.

2. *Ex Parte Post*, Eying their Glorification, for as his purposes of doing good were without beginning, so his executions in bestowing good are without end. *Psal.* 117. 2. *His mercifull kindnesse is great, and his truth endureth for ever*; and, *we shall be for ever with the Lord*, 1 *Thes.* 4. 17. Eternity is the heaven of heaven [b]. When a thousand millions of yeares are run out, heaven shall be the same, and the glorified Saints the same; Whom he loves once he loves unto the end: *Thou shalt see an end of all perfections under the Sunne*, but of Gods goodnesse to beleevers there shall be no end.

[b] The Saints happinesse in heaven, *nullâ rerum vicissitudine tolletur vel minuetur.* Adam. Sasbout. Hom. 2. in Gen. 3. 19. *Gaudium in fine, sed gaudium sine fine.*

Bernard. de Divers. 19. *Amiantus* is a stone that can never be defi-

led. *Iſidor. Etym. lib.* 16. *cap.* 4. And *Amarantus* a moſt curious flower, that being gathered continues a long time freſh and greene. *Clemens Pædagog. lib.* 1. *cap.* 8. Well, the Saints one day ſhall weare ſuch a crown as ſhall be ſtudded with the ſtone *Amiantus*, and garniſhed with the flower *Amarantus*. For *Peter* ſaith, *'tis undefiled and that fadeth not away.* 1 Pet. 1. 4. Trap.

1 *Uſe.*

Here is matter of reproofe, or rather lamentation. 1. Over ſuch as have lived without taſting this goodneſſe all their dayes; How many have waſted the greateſt part of their precious and irrecoverable time, and are ſo beſotted and taken up with outward things, good in their kinde and place, that to this day they are ignorant of divine ſweetneſſe, & have lived without any ſenſe of this goodneſſe ever ſince they were born. 2. Over all that ſinne againſt this infinite goodneſſe, theſe preſume upon God, and ſinne that grace may abound. Nothing is more common then to be drawn by the mercy of God to all licentiouſneſſe. Tell men of ſinne, and they tuſh at it[d]—Whoh! God is good, and Chriſt hath dyed, and at what time ſoever, &c. Thus the greateſt motive to obedience is made an encouragement to prophaneneſſe, but this will prove a ſad aggravation of all thy unkindneſſe, and abuſed patience will turne into fury. *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. *He is abundant in goodneſſe, and will by no means cleare the guilty.* i.e. Obſtinate, impenitent wretches, that *deſpiſe his good-*

[d] *An quia Deus bonus eſt idcò tu malus?* Ambroſ. *Pravi cordis eſt id.ò malum eſſe quia Deus bonus eſt.* Bernard in Cant.

goodneſſe [c]. Rom. 2. 4. And ſo *treaſure up to themſelves wrath againſt the day of wrath.* Ah fooliſh and perverſe ſinners, doe you thus requite the Lord for all his goodneſſe, and wiſh no better to your own ſoules? The Lord give you hearts to conſider where you are, what you are doing, and whither you are going; As yet you behold the white flagge of mercy, but God will ſhortly hang out his black flagge of defiance, and then laugh you to ſcorn, &c.

[c] *Ergò ubi non regnat Dei timor, ſecuritas in rebus proſperis eſt contemptus ac ludibrium immenſæ ejus bonitatis. Unde ſequitur graviores pœnas jure daturos quibus in hac vita Deus frustrà pepercerit.* Calvin in Rom. 2. 4. *Cavendum ergò ne illicito bonorum abuſu infelicem hunc theſaurum nobis reponamus.* Idem in Rom. 2. 5.

2 *Uſe.* Is the Lord ſo exceeding good, then [f] *let not any man ſay when he is tempted, he is tempted of God,* James 1. 13. *God tempts no man.* Why? He is goodneſſe it ſelfe; That which is good of it ſelfe hath no evill mixed with it; Honey hath no ſowre in it, the Sunne hath no darkneſſe, and God is nothing but goodneſſe, and therefore cannot tempt men to ſin. Yea but ſome will ſay, he decreed my ſin, for nothing comes to paſſe without his will, and the ſecond cauſes move not unleſſe they be moved by the firſt. I anſwer; The firſt cauſe is not the cauſe of the error that is in the motion of

2 *Uſe.*

[f] *Deus, inquit, naturâ bonus eſt, nullis malis ſollicitari poteſt, ideoq; neminem ſolicitat ad mala.* Bulling. in Jacob. 1. 13. *Deus malum non appetit ergò neq; malè agendi nobis author eſt.* Calvinus. *Deo reprobante non irrogatur aliquid quo homo ſit deterior, ſed tantum non crogatur quo fiat melior.* Auguſtin.

the

the ſecond, though it be the cauſe of the motion. As in the wheeles of a Clock, the principall wheele with his motion turns about the leſſer, yet if there be any error in the motion of a leſſer wheele for want of a tooth, or the like, it is no cauſe at all thereof. Now ſin is not properly a motion, but an error in the motion of thy heart. Gods will being the firſt cauſe produceth the motions of the heart, for *in him we live, move, and have our being*, but if there be any ſin, any errour in the motion of thy heart, thine own will is the cauſe thereof, God onely withdraws his grace from thee, and leaves thee to thy ſelfe, as not being bound unto thee: He doth not urge thee nor preſſe thee unto ſin, he doth not infuſe or inſtill into thy minde any wicked motions (as doth Satan) he onely leaves thee to thy luſts. [g] Biſhop *Davenant* ſaith well, Preterition or Reprobation is not a decree neceſſitating men to ſin, but a decree permitting men not elect out of the freedome of their own wills to neglect and abuſe ſuch meanes as God hath appointed for ſalvation. [h] *Fulgentius*, [i] *Proſper*, [k] *Zanchy*, [l] *Suarez*, and [m] *Calvin*, all ſay the ſame thing. Divines holding reprobation ſay no more then this, that God hath a hand in the production of ſinfull Actions, but not as they have *formalem rationem peccati*, he is not the cauſe

[g] Biſh. *Davenant* in his Animadverſions on a Treatiſe called *Gods love to mankinde*. pag. 49. 69. 113. 137. 144. 162. and 164.
[h] *Fulgent. ad Monim. lib.* 1. *cap.* 17.
[i] *Proſper. ad object. Vincent.* 3.
[k] *Zanch. de Naturâ Dei lib.* 5. *pag.* 712.
[l] *Suarez in opuſc. lib.* 2. *pag.* 175.
[m] *Calvin* on 2 *Theſſ.* 2.

cauſe of the Obliquity or ſinfulneſſe of the Action, but leaves us to our perverſe wills, and [a] *Aquinas* himſelfe confeſſeth this, although I confeſſe a learned Divine hath gone too far of late. But hath not Chriſt taught us to pray the Father, he would not *lead us into Tentation?* I anſwer, the meaning is this, We pray that God would neither ſuffer us to be led by others, nor lead us himſelfe judicially into tentation.

[a] In 1. *Aquin. qu.* 19. *p.* 436. and *Valentianus in opuſc. lib.* 2. *cap.* 1. *pag.* 126.

1. That he would not ſuffer others and deliver us up to the world, Satan, or our own luſts, to be tempted and conquered by them; For none can tempt us without leave from God, as in the caſe of *Ahab* and *Job*. Now wee pray not that God would never let us once be tempted, but that he would uphold us, give us ſtrength to withſtand, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. Or policy to eſcape it, and that he would make us watchfull, patient, and victorious, that it may turne for our good.

2. We pray that he would not lead us [o] with the left hand of juſtice into Tentation in a judiciall manner, [p] puniſhing one ſin with another, as 2 *Sam.* 24. 1. *Pſal.* 81. 3. *Rom.* 1. 28. *Eph.* 4. 18. *Act.* 5. 3. 2 *Tim.* 2. 15. which he doth for theſe ſinnes [q] eſpecially.

[o] Sir *Richard Baker* on the Lords Prayer. *pag.* 186.
[p] *Chemnit. in harmon. C.* 51. *pag.* 621.
[q] *Ward* on Mat. 6. 13. *pag.* 316.

1. Ignorance, *Rom.* 2. 21. 2 *Cor.* 4. 4.

2. Inconſtancy & wavering in Religion. *Eph.* 4. 14. *Rom.* 1. 25.

3. Se-

3. Security and ſlighting of Gods calls, *Prov.* 1. 24. &c. 29, 30. 1 *King.* 22. 8.

4. Cleaving to ſome boſome ſinne, *Rom.* 1. 26. 29. 2 *Pet.* 2. 12, 13. eſpecially if through back-ſliding and Apoſtaſie, 2. *Pet.* 20, 21, 22.

5. Calumniating and ſcandalizing of God and Religion, *Rom.* 1. 21. Thus you ſee, that although we are taught to pray God not to lead us into tentation [r], yet he cannot be ſaid to allure or tempt any man to ſin, his goodneſſe is ſuch.

[r] *Hæc loquendi formâ utitur, ne nos inducas in Tentationẽ, non quod Deus quenquam tentat, ſed quia Deus non modo Satanæ libidini nos permittit; ut ignem concupiſcentiæ accendat, ſed eo utitur iræ ſuæ miniſtro quoties vult homines in exitium præcipites agere, ipſe quoq; ſuo modo in Tentationem inducit.* Calvinus in Matth. 6. 13. *Imbecilles ſumus homines, idèo non debemus noſmetipſos in Tentationes injicere, ſed ſi inciderimus orandum nè abſorbeamur á tentatione; Abſorptus enim & victus ille in profundum Tentationis inductus eſt, at non item qui incidit & vincit.* Theophylact. Enar. in Mat. 6. 13. In 8to. Pag. 16.

3. *Uſe.*

3. Next is the Lord ſo exceeding good, then beleeve not calumnies, for heretiques have ſaid even of God, that he is not good, who yet is goodneſſe it ſelfe. *Sardian* began it, and *Marcion* after him (ſaith *Tertullian*,) *Marcion* being excommunicated for uncleanneſſe, in envy taught that blaſphemy [s] and *Bonum juſtitiæ* are all one, and it is in order to his own glory. *Tertull. contrà Marcion. lib.* 2. *cap.* 14.

[s] He urged *Amos* 3. 6. But *malum Pœnæ*

Chryſoſtome

Chryſoſtome ſaith, he had conference with a *Marcioniſte*, and the blaſphemer reaſoned thus; God is not good becauſe he takes account of ſin, &c. To whom the Father anſwered, God is therefore good, for if men now exceed Lyons and Beares and Tygres, what then would they doe if God ſhould take no account of ſinne; And [t] *Ambroſe* ſaith, the goodneſſe of God is ſeene in his harſhneſſe and ſeverity againſt ſinne, which doth not onely diſhonour God, but debaſe us. So that you ſee God is good although he takes an account of ſinne, let heretiques and blaſphemers think and ſay what they will. Well, Brethren, the ſervant is not better then his Maſter, remember God and Chriſt and the Saints have been ſlandered and falſely accuſed before you, and therefore think it no new thing, if you meet with like uſage. Was not [u] Chriſt that *went up and down doing good*, and was goodneſſe it ſelfe, was not he termed *a wine-bibber, a blaſphemer, a Devill? Yet being reviled, he reviled not againe*, ſaith *Peter*; All the Saints before you have tafted of the ſame cup.

[t] *Etiam in ſeveritate eſt bonitas Dei, ut recurrat unuſquiſq; caſtigatus, & pedem referat à peccatis & ad tramitē, bonamq; converſationē revertatur.* Ambroſ.

[u] *Quum dira in eum congererent convitia Judæi & horum primores Phariſæi & Scribæ, quumq; non deeſſent graviſſima ſcelera quæ Dominus ipſe Chriſtus in adverſarios potuiſſet ejaculari, obticuit tamen, imò pro hoſtibus ſuis Patrem obſecravit cæcitatis eorum miſertus.* Bullinger. in 1 Pet. 2. 23.

Amos

Amos was accuſed by *Amaziah*, as one that preacht againſt the King: and *Ezra* 4. the King is told, that if the Jewes rebuild the wall, they will pay no Toll nor Tribute: *Paul* was called *a peſtilent fellow, and a mover of ſedition*: *Calvin*, *Beza*, and *Bucer* accuſed as layers of ſedition, of rebellion. Was not *Luther* called the very Trumpet of rebellion, and *Eliab the troubler of Iſrael?* The Arrians charged *Athanaſius* with adultery, murder, and witchcraft; ſo true was that propheſie of Chriſt, *Men ſhall hate you, and ſpeak all manner of evill falſly for my names ſake.* As it is a great ſinne to invent, coyn, and [w] raiſe ſlanders to beſpatter innocency, which is very rife in our dayes, even among Profeſſors of different judgements, [x] ſo it is no leſſe a ſinne to heare, beleeve, and blaze ſlanders; [y] and beleevers ought to make good uſe of ſlanders, and *not return railing for railing.*

w Prov. 22. 1. Eph. 4. 31. Exod. 23. 1. Prov. 3. 29. Exod. 22. 28.
x 1 Tim. 5. 19. Levit. 19. 16. 1 Cor. 13. 5. 1 Sam. 24. 9.

Prov. 17. 4. Pſal. 15. 3. Mat. 18 15. Prov. 10. 18. 1 Theſſ. 4. 11. Geneſ. 18. 21. y 2 Kings 19. 14. 18. Pſal. 31. 18. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 12. & 1 Pet. 3. 16. and ſee the 9 verſe. Eccleſ. 7. 21. Pſal. 38. 12, 13. Elſe Prov 15. 1. 15. Prov. 26. 4: Job 27. 5. Pſal. 37. 6. Iſai. 61. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 14. and Matth. 5. 12.

4 *Uſe.*

4. Admire the goodneſſe of Gods Nature, let it kindle in our hearts [z] deſires after him: He is provoked every day, and yet he ſpares us, and he would fain overcome our evill with his good. *Heare O Heavens, and*

z Pſal. 31. 19. and 21. 33.

and give eare O earth, let Angels and Men ſtand gazing and wondring at the matchleſſe goodneſſe of God. Oh how ſhould this inge our affections, and make us all in love, yea all love to Chriſt. [a] *O love the Lord all ye Saints*, here is a Load-ſtone to draw your hearts, the goodneſſe of God to beleevers: we live upon his goodneſſe every moment, no ſubſiſting without it. Oh the unſearchable riches of Free Grace! [c] You may love and prize other things, and yet not enjoy them; whoſoever loves God is one with him, which was a ſweet meditation of *Guigo*.

5. *Is* the Lord ſo exceeding good? Oh then delight not to grieve him, feare to diſpleaſe him; can you find in your hearts to anger ſuch a God, as is goodneſſe & ſweetneſſe it ſelfe? Who would provoke ſuch a God? What delight can you take in ſadding the heart of Chriſt, which overflows with love, and all this to make work for repentance, to vaile his face from you, for in very faithfulneſſe he muſt frown and afflict you. *Bernard* ſaith, for a man to doe good for good is naturall, to doe evill for evill is ſinfull, but for a man to doe evill for good, is Diabolicall. *There is mercy* [d] *with God that he may be feared*, Pſalm 130.

[a] *Ama unum illud bonum in quo omne bonum eſt & ſufficit*, Anſel. in Proſol. cap. 25.

[b] *Niſi Deus bonus eſſet ſuper terrã quis ſtare poteſt?* Amb. in Pſal. 119.

[c] *Ama quod amando carere nequeas*. Guigo Med. cap. 17.

5. *Uſe.*

[d] There is an active filiall, as well as a paſſive ſlaviſh feare: where juſtice breeds but ſtubbornneſſe, mercy breeds reverence. *Res eſt ſolliciti plena timoris amor.* Sir *Richard Baker* on Pſal. 130. 4. p. 189. Juſtice perhaps may have the knee of feare, yet none but Mercy hath her heart. *Id. ibid.*

4. *The*

4. The [c] long-ſuffering and goodneſſe of God ſhould lead us to repentance, Rom. 2. 4. [f] And it is ſaid of Beleevers, *They ſhall feare the Lord and his goodneſſe in the latter dayes*, Hoſ. 3. 5.

[c] *Deus Opt. Max. μακροθυμία. i. e. Longanimitate probat genus humanum*, Procopius in Reg. lib. 3. c. 19.

[f] *Davidem Regem ſuum, i. e. Chriſtum ejus filium. Nomen Patris pro Filio frequentiſſimum eſt in Scripturis, David pro Chriſto.* Hier. Zanchius in Hoſ. 3. 5. *(& bonitatem ejus) Indicat ergo Deum non appariturum formidabilem neq; terribilem, ſed clementem & bonum, ideoque illos ſuaviter ad ſe attracturum ſua bonitate ut ei ſponte & hilariter inſerviant; Nec apparet ita bonus & clemens niſi in Chriſto, quia per Chriſtum ſolum Dei bonitas nobis, guſtanda proponitur & communicatur* Id. ibid. pag. 58. & 64.

6 Uſe.

6. See and examine if the Lord be good to you in this peculiar manner, enquire whether you have intereſt in this God and all his goodneſſe, whether on good grounds you can ſay with *David, My* [g] *goodneſſe, my fortreſſe, my deliverer*, Pſa. 144. 2.

[g] *Noſtra plus aliis placent*, P. Syr.

1. Art thou purged from thy defilements, and art thou pure in heart? Then God is peculiarly good to thee, *Pſal.* 73. 1. *Truly God is good to Iſrael, even ſuch as are of a clean heart.* Except thou art clean, he cannot with honour love thee, and did not he love thee firſt, thou couldſt not be made clean.

2. Doſt thou continually feare him, and walk as under his piercing eye? 'Twas a true ſaying of *Bernard*, [h] Onely the ſonnes of wrath feare not wrath. *Pſal.* 31. 19. *O how great*

[h] *Soli filii iræ iram non ſentiunt.* Bern. in Ep 256.

great is thy goodneſſe which thou haſt laid up for them that feare thee? God is to be feared ([i] ſaith *Gregory*) that he may not be feared; and they that feare God (ſaith *Origen*) feare nothing elſe [k].

3. Are all the ſtakes of thy truſt and confidence pitcht in God? Doſt thou run to him in diſtreſſe, and poure out thy complaints in his boſome? See *Pſal.* 31.19. *How great is thy goodneſſe which thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in thee? The juſt ſhall live by faith*, their continuall dependance is on God. Nay,

4. Doſt thou but long and thirſt after him, and vehemently wiſh thou hadſt intereſt in him and all his goodneſſe, certainly God is thine. *Pſal.* 107.9. *Hee ſatisfies the longing ſoule, and fills the hungry ſoule with goodnes.* When a woman longs for dainties ſhe hears of, 'tis a ſign (ſaith one) ſhe is breeding; and if qualms of ſickneſſe come on her, it argues ſhe is wth child: and ſo if thou long'ſt after Chriſt, and grace, & comfort, and if thou art ſick of love, be aſſured that Chriſt is formed in you. [l] True deſires are the breathings of a broken heart, which God will not deſpiſe. There may be faint wiſhings and wouldings in the worſt, thus *Balaam* deſired to dye the death of the righteous, but cared not to live their life; and *Pilate* deſired to know what was truth, but

[i] *Timendus ne timeatur*, Greg in Evang. 26.

[k] *Timor timore ut clavus clavo pellitur*, ſaith one, *Qui timet Deum, timet nihil præter eum.* Origen in Levit. 16.

[l] *Traps* Expoſ. of Mat. 5.6.

ſtaid not to heare it [m]. But our deſires, as they muſt be ardent and violent, ſo alſo impatient and laborious, ſeconded with endeavours after the thing deſired. Now if you find in your ſelves theſe foure things, Purity, Feare, Truſt and Deſire, conclude with *David*, God is your goodneſſe.

[m] *Carnales nõ curant quevere quæ tamen deſiderãt invenire, cupientes conſequi ſed non & ſequi.* Bernard.

7 *Uſe.*

7. This ſhould perſwade ſinners that are ignorant of divine ſweetneſſe, to try God and his wayes: this is the main duty that is urged in the Text, *Taſte and ſee how good the Lord is*; that is, take delight in his Word, venture upon him, yeeld up your ſelves to his ſervice, and turne your feet into his Teſtimonies: [n] you will ſoone get *hidden Manna*, and have morſels to eat the world knowes not of, you will quickly reliſh Divine ſweetneſſe, and blame your ſelves you taſted it no ſooner. As [o] *Paul* lookt upon himſelfe as *one born out of due time*, becauſe he was converted no ſooner, 1 *Cor.* 15. 8. Thou wilt ſmite on the thigh and ſay, Ah wretch that I am, what have I done, and where have I been all this while? Why have I been ſuch a ſtranger to God hitherto? O that I could heare you thus chiding and rating your ſelves in this reſpect!

[n] *Ab illis qui guſtarunt mira cum dulcedine percipitur nova vita. Vobis itaq; optimi fratres, novum hoc videri non debet ſiquidem guſtaſtis quam benignus ſit. Deus.* Muſculus

[o] Annot. on the Bible printed 1645. and *Sa Moore* in his Chriſtians heart drawn out to Chriſt. pag. 17.

8. *Uſe.*

8. Let beleevers be thankfull for all this goodneſſe; *O give unto the Lord the honour due unto his Name, and worſhip him withholy worſhip.*

worſhip. You can ſing thoſe new Songs, which none can learn but the redeemed from the earth. Every one cannot finger *Davids* Harp, *the upright in heart ſhall glory*; the nightingale is welcome into your gardens, but not the Skreech-owle. 'Tis Angels work, and ſhould bee our delight. [p] Surely you will loſe nothing by lifting up God in your praiſes, and *praiſe is comely for the upright*, 'tis all the rent you pay to God for his goodneſſe. [q] Have you not cauſe of thankfulneſſe? What greater felicity then to be the object of Divine love? God hath given you Chriſt, and with him all things. Oh therefore know well your happineſſe, that ſo your ſleep may be pleaſant to you, your hearts may be filled with joy, and your mouthes with praiſes.

p *Aſcenſus gratiarum eſt, deſcenſus gratiæ.* Bernard.

q *Amnem ſequatur qui viam vult ad mare.* Plautus. *Origo fontium omnium mare, bonorum omnium Deus.* Bern. in Cant

9. Imitate God in goodneſſe, and *be yee followers of God as deare children*, ſtrive to be *holy as he is holy, perfect as he is perfect, merciſull as he is merciſull*, good as he is good. Be good and doe good, as to all men, ſo *eſpecially to the houſhold of faith*: [r] ſtrive to imitate ſo ſacred a nature, and though you muſt needs come infinitly ſhort, yet delight to write after ſo fair a Copie. *James* bids us *be eaſily intreated, full of mercy and good workes*; and *Paul* ſaith, *Be kinde one to another, courteous, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Chriſts ſake hath forgiven*

9. *Uſe.*

r *Summa religionis eſt imitari quem colis.* Auguſt.

you, [r] left God repent of all his goodneſſe to you.

[r] *Miſericordiam qui non præſtat alteri, tollit ſibi.* Chryſologus in Serm. 43.

10. *Uſe.* 10. Eſteeme nothing ſweet or good any further then you can finde or enjoy God in it; for all goodneſſe is derived from him, and without him is nothing good that is good. *Auſtin* loved to read *Tully* before his converſion, but not ſo much afterwards, *quia nomen Jeſu non erat ibi*, he could not find Chriſt named there, *Tully* was unacquainted with God. [t] The Jewes, ſay the Rabbins, throw the Book of *Eſter* to the ground ere they read it, becauſe the name of God is not once there. The thing I aim at is this, Look how much of God you can find in any creature, in any mercy, in any duty, and ſo much of reall comfort you may expect in them; for God is good, and nothing is good without him.

[t] Dr. *Stoughton in his love ſick Spouſe* p. 133.

11. *Uſe.* Laſtly, keep in with this good God, and as the Apoſtle adviſeth you, be carefull to *abide in his goodneſſe*, Rom. 11. 22. that is, having taſted divine ſweetneſſe, drive a conſtant trade with God, keep daily correſpondence with Chriſt, that ſo you may be preſerved in communion with heaven. [u] God forſakes none, but they firſt forſake him. True, once gracious and ever gracious; but know, men may dream they have grace,

[u] *Deus priuſ quam deſeratur neminem deſerit.* Auguſtin.

grace, and yet be deceived, and ſuch as have grace may want comfort, and but juſt ſcramble to heaven. w To conclude, keep cloſe unto your God, prize his preſence, adore his diſcoveries, admire his bounty, implore his aid, and attend his calls, ſo ſhall God take delight in you, and you in Him. *Amen.*

w Be not like a waning, but like a new Moon, that is, increaſing. Many begin glorioufly, but end ſhamefully, our end muſt be beſt. El. Par. on Rom. p. 192 *Illi permanent in Dei bonitate qui retinent fidem & bonam conſcientiam.* Nic. Hemingius in Rom. 11. 22. *Fruſtra velociter currit, qui priuſquam ad metas venerit, deficit.* Greg. Mor. lib. 2. cap. 40.